

# **JOHN F. CAHLAN:**

## **REMINISCENCES OF A RENO AND LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, NEWSPAPERMAN, UNIVERSITY REGENT, AND PUBLIC-SPIRITED CITIZEN**

Interviewee: John F. Cahlan

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### Description

John Francis Cahlan is a native of Nevada, born in Reno in 1902. He had a long career as a newspaperman and followed an avocation in politics, serving as a regent of the University of Nevada, a legislative lobbyist, and as an instigator of the establishment of the Nevada State Archives.

Few residents of Nevada have had greater contact with the events and the men who have shaped the state's history in the past half-century than John Cahlan. Born in Reno and briefly a resident of Carson City, Cahlan attended the University of Nevada in the 1920s. He worked for the *Nevada State Journal* when James G. Scrugham was its owner, and moved to Las Vegas when newspapering was still in its adolescence there. Cahlan was not a selective scholar—a newspaperman cannot afford to be that. He was, rather, a reporter trained by long service to listen for the feature angle or the news lead. Names of nationally famous and locally prominent personalities abound; Mr. Cahlan obviously took pride in his encounters with the people who make news.

Cahlan watched the building of Hoover Dam, the growth of Las Vegas, and the development of the Atomic Energy Commission's testing facility from a unique point of view. His activities as political prophet and seer, legislative reporter, university regent, juvenile officer, and service club activist took him into far more strategic situations than most Nevadans ever could experience. The state was much smaller in population during Mr. Cahlan's busiest years, and it is doubtful that future archivists will have a comparable range of opportunities. This account is certain to be of value, not only for its descriptions of the events that Cahlan saw firsthand, but also for the small-town festivities, the hearsay that it preserves, and for the gossip—the most natural and honest kind of narration—that is here put in permanent form.

Scholars of the future may find reason to recheck some of Cahlan's assertions or descriptions—this is one of the functions of scholarship—but they will do well to keep this account close at hand. It is representative, earnest, patriotic, local history, related with the pride and self-assurance that was common to those who are now being called "Old Nevadans."



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An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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## PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler’s meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber  
Director, UNOHP  
July 2012

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## INTRODUCTION

John Francis Cahlan is a native of Nevada, born in Reno in 1902. He had a long career as a newspaperman and followed an avocation in politics, serving as a Regent of the University of Nevada, a legislative lobbyist, and as an instigator of establishment of the Nevada State Archives. A later career led to a business in economic development. Professor James Hulse's introduction outlines Mr. Cahlan's considerable achievements.

When invited to participate in the Oral History Project, Mr. Cahlan accepted enthusiastically. With a journalist's instinct for combining facts and colorful asides, he told his story in a series of six interviews all held in the office of the Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation (SNIF), Las Vegas, Nevada, from April 8 to April 10, 1968. A cooperative chronicler, he answered all questions and added observations with frankness and apparent enjoyment.

Mr. Cahlan's review of his memoir resulted in few significant changes in the context of the script, and with minor revisions in sentence structure in some places. A bonus

of this review was the addition of a chapter on "Cahlan's School of Journalism," written at the time of his checking the transcript.

The Oral History Project of the University of Nevada, Reno, Library preserves the past and the present for future research by tape-recording the reminiscences of persons who have played significant roles in the development of Nevada and the West, or who have witnessed events of importance. Scripts resulting from the interviews are deposited in the Special Collections Department of the University Library, where they are available to scholars. John F. Cahlan's oral history is designated as open for research.

Mary Ellen Glass  
University of Nevada, Reno  
1970



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## SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

John Francis Cahlan needs no introducer or interpreter. In the first place he has been one of the best-known members of the profession that has unique advantages in public relations; he has long had maximum "public exposure" as a journalist and active citizen. He represents a generation of peripatetic Nevadans who had an unusual opportunity to know their region well. Furthermore, he does not have any trouble expressing himself and he is not reticent about discussing the extent and nature of his involvements.

Few residents of Nevada have had greater contact with the events and the men who have shaped the state's history in the past half century. Born in Reno and briefly a resident of Carson City, John Cahlan attended the University of Nevada in the 1920's. He worked for the *Nevada State Journal* when James G. Scrugham was its owner and moved to Las Vegas when newspapering was still in its adolescence there. Cahlan is not a selective scholar—a newspaperman cannot afford to be that. He is rather a reporter trained by

long service to listen for the feature angle or the news "lead." Names of nationally famous and locally prominent personalities abound; Mr. Cahlan obviously takes pride in his encounters with the people who make news. He watched the building of Hoover Dam, the growth of Las Vegas, and the development of the Atomic Energy Commission's testing facility from a unique point of view. His activities as political prophet and seer, legislative reporter, university regent, juvenile officer, and service club activist took him into far more strategic situations than most Nevadans ever could experience. The state was much smaller in population during Mr. Cahlan's busiest years, and it is doubtful that future activists will have a comparable range of opportunities. This account is certain to be of value not only for its descriptions of the events that Cahlan saw first-hand, but also for the small-town festivities, the hearsay that it preserves, and for the gossip—the most natural and honest kind of narration—that is here put in permanent form.

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James W. Hulse  
Department of History  
University of Nevada, Reno  
1969

## MY EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

My name is John Francis Cahlan, and I was born in Reno on the twenty-fifth day of August, 1902.

Because of the type of work I have been in, I have known presidents and prostitutes, congressmen and convicts, governors and grubstakers, mayors and murderers, ministers and muggers, ball players and bootleggers, and all types of assorted other citizens.

I was born at 518 North Center Street in Reno. It was a little house that was there for many, many years and later became the site of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity house. My earliest recollections of Reno are sort of random. The first thing I think I can remember was the unpaved streets in which a large steamroller with a small roller in front and the big back wheels used to come up and down the street about once a month. And one of my pet thoughts was to get inside the big wheel and walk along as it turned over. I never made it, but I still had the yen to do it.

I also can remember when they were putting in the sewer line on Center Street. Reno at the time was, oh, I should judge about

an 8,000 population. They were just extending the paved streets and the sewer line. They had the pipe laid on end, and I got to playing in one of the sewer pipes and managed to get myself stuck. My mother had to call the fire department to get me out which caused quite a sensation on the 500 block on North Center Street!

I also can remember when I had the diphtheria. I was one of the very few people in Reno, or anywhere else at the time, that survived diphtheria because it was then a very serious disease and prior to this time there was no antidote for the thing. But just prior to the time I got it, the antitoxin was discovered, and when I got the disease, Dr. Thom in Reno told my mother that this new antitoxin was available and that it was either that or dying. So my mother and father decided that it would be a good idea for me to get the antitoxin. And I received the dose and was the first one in the state of Nevada to so receive it. As you can see, it worked.

The recollections I have in Reno, I can remember the streetcars that used to run on

the streets of Reno. Well, I was too small at that time to remember them very distinctly. Later on, when I grew up in Reno, we were coming back from Carson City, I can remember the streetcars very well. They used to have the streetcar barns down on Fourth Street about halfway to Sparks, and early in the morning they would come up to the Southern Pacific depot on Center Street by the Overland Hotel where they would start their run. One would go out clear out Second Street to the end of the city limits; another one would go up to the University of Nevada up Sierra Street; and another one would go to Sparks up Fourth Street. Later on, the runs were extended out Fourth Street west to Ralston and up Ralston to the bottom of the hill. And then when Pete Burke established his Burke's Addition out in the southeast section of Reno, they extended the car lines out there, and then they ran a separate line out to Moana Springs. That one went out Virginia Street to California and up California to Plumas, I believe it was, and out to Moana Lane and over to Moana Springs.

One night when I was living in Reno, my father and mother, my brother and myself had gone to Susanville to visit my father's family there and were coming back on the old NCO railroad. We got to the top of the hill and started down into the valley, and we saw a real large fire in Reno. And when we got to the depot, we could see that it was someplace downtown, so we followed the fire department to the Catholic church on Second and Stevenson, I think it is—anyway, it was the old St. Thomas Aquinas church, and in back of that was the Wheelmen's Association, which was a very famous—in the early days—bicycling club that had been formed in Reno around the turn of the century or earlier. My mother and father used to belong to it. The church and the Wheelmen's clubhouse burned completely to the ground and in

razing the Wheelmen's Club, destroyed all of the trophies that they had won up and down the Pacific Coast. And in the church, a lot of very precious statuary and things were lost. Father Thomas M. Tubman was the priest at the church at that time. He later became a bishop and was the first bishop, I believe, in the Reno diocese.

When I was six years old, in 1908, my father became Inspector of the Nevada state police under Governor Sparks, and we moved to Carson City. My father established the first Bertillon identification system, I think, in the West Coast and certainly in Nevada. It was an operation which identified criminals, not only by fingerprints, but by measurements of their head and their upper anatomy. This was made famous by the French penal authority, Bertillon. And that was why it was called "Bertillon System."

When we first got to Carson City, it was quite a heartbreak for a young kid who had spent the first six years of his life in Reno and made all his friends in Reno. To be uprooted and taken to Carson City for Lord only knows what. And I can remember spending about three days crying my eyes out 'cause I didn't have any friends and didn't know anybody at school. However, things changed after we got to go to school. I started first grade in Carson City, having gone to the Babcock kindergarten in Reno prior to leaving for Carson City.

When I started first grade in Carson City, my teacher was Miss Alice Bryant, and my brother and I went to the school—Carson City School, which was on Kings Canyon Road. It was right across the street from the Carson City brewery, which was run by Max Stenz. His daughter was one of our schoolmates, and we still are friendly and see each other every once in a while.

As we went through school in Carson City, we became well acquainted with people

like Dutch Berning, who later became state highway engineer; and Dwight and "Bunk" Edwards, John Trapp, Leonard Sullivan, and of course, most of the people that were in political life there. The first governor that I met, of course, was John Sparks, who had appointed my father Inspector of state police and also on his staff.

Carson City was a very small town at the time, and the place that the legislators and all of the state officials gathered was the Arlington Hotel, which now has been torn down and is a parking lot. The manager of the hotel was Bill Maxwell, a very large and very human sort of a person, and we became well acquainted with Bill Maxwell. And on a Sunday, everybody used to go to the Arlington Hotel for dinner and then go up to the depot, the V and T depot, to watch the train from Virginia City go through and on to Reno. That was the routine on a Sunday night for everybody in the community, and you'd see everybody on the station platform there, whether they were going anywhere or not.

I can well recall, too, when they were building the governor's mansion. My brother and I used to go up—while they were building the thing—and play in the many rooms that were being built as a part of the mansion. As I go through the mansion these days, I can remember all the fun that we used to have playing in the governor's mansion as it was going up. But after we would play in the mansion in the fall, they used to have the wheat threshing machines come in down on the valley, right underneath the governor's mansion, and my brother and I'd get on there and catch field mice and take 'em over and train 'em.

I can also remember, too, the Lake Tahoe vacations that we used to have in the summertime. The state police department had a summer camp just to the west of Glenbrook,

and we'd go up there during the month of August. Half of the men of the department would take their vacation in the early part of August, and the other half would take it in the second part of August, and as a result, the women and children would have a month's vacation up there. This was just west of the old ship building yards which were installed up there when the steamer, *Tallac*, was built. It was very early—around the time that Virginia City was booming—that the shipyard was established.

Oh, and incidentally, while I'm speaking of Virginia City, I might trace my parents so that you will see that the Cahlan family has been around the state of Nevada quite a long time. My father's father, John Cahlan, came into Honey Lake Valley around Susanville in 1859. He came there from Marysville, California, where he had arrived in September of that year after he came across the plains with an expedition whose purpose was to explore Pike's Peak. Zebulon Pike, explorer and army officer, had discovered Pike's Peak in 1806. The 1859 expedition was to study the area, but my grandfather and several others decided to leave the Rockies and go on out West. By the early 1860's, he was hauling to the Comstock Lode from Marysville. He settled in Marysville and began hauling freight to the Mother Lode country. Then in 1863 a disastrous flood on the Yuba River washed away his loaded wagons and his teams. So he had to start all over again, and he hired out to another teamster outfit in Marysville and got enough money to buy himself a team and move to Reno, where he was engaged in freighting over Geiger Grade.

An interesting sidelight on his freighting time was—I think it was the winter of '75. They had a terrific snowstorm in the area, and nobody got into Virginia City with any supplies for about three or four months. Ay

grandfather drove the first team into Virginia City with a load of flour, and the man he was doing business with was unable to pay him. But he told my grandfather that he would give him the deed to some lots in Reno. But my grandfather told him that he didn't have to worry about it. He'd pick it up the next time he came around. I'm not sure, but I don't think my grandfather ever got paid for the flour. But the lots that the man offered to deed to my grandfather were on Virginia Street from the Truckee River on the west side of Virginia Street, from the Truckee River to Second Street, from Second Street to Sierra Street, and back down to the river which now is the heart of the city of Reno. So that's how close we came to be landed property owners.

But anyway, my mother's father, Frank Marion Edmunds, was a hoisting engineer in Virginia City, and my mother's mother, Gertrude Barron Edmunds, was a schoolteacher. Both of them had come out from New Hampshire, and they had lived within a few miles of each other in New Hampshire and didn't know each other. He was born in Andover and she in Concord. And when they got to Virginia City, my grandfather courted my grandmother, and married her.

My mother was born October 30, 1875 in Virginia City. As I say, her father was a hoisting engineer and was on duty the night that they had the tragic Savage fire in which several people lost their lives. My mother said that she could remember the night when the fire broke out. It was about sundown, and she saw this red haze or red glow off to the left of their front window, and she called her father's attention to it, and he said, "Oh, my God, the—there's a mine fire!" so he went down and stayed on the job for, as my mother said, I think it was forty-eight hours without rest, doing rescue work, and other things that could be done.

In the Edmunds family, there were two other daughters. My mother, Marion, was the oldest; Alice Edmunds, who later became Mrs. Will Sauer—her husband was a rancher in the Washoe Valley; and the third daughter, Amy Edmunds, who never married and taught school in Butte, Montana, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. She returned to Nevada about a year before she died. So that about takes care of the family.

My grandfather had two other daughters. My father's mother, Charlotte Farley Cahlan, died when he was about five years old. And my grandfather married another wife, Charlotte Warren Cahlan, and they had two daughters, Mrs. R. Hyrum Browne (Geneva Cahlan), who now lives in California, and Mrs. Arthur Mathews (Lena Cahlan), who also lives in California. As I say, both my brother and I were both born in Reno. I have a daughter, Virginia Cahlan Otero, who was born in Las Vegas. My brother has a daughter, Ruth Marion Henderson, who was born in Elko, and a son, John Forest Cahlan, who was born in Las Vegas. The son has three sons, Albert Edmunds Cahlan II, John Forest Cahlan, Jr., and Stephen Bradford Cahlan, all of whom were born in Las Vegas. Their mother was the former Jean Garner. The only "foreigners" in the family are my niece's children, all of whom were born in Mt. Ayr, Iowa. They are Miss Susan Henderson, Bruce Henderson, David Lee Henderson, and Patrick Henderson. Their father is Milton Henderson of Mt. Ayr, Iowa.

Now I'll get back up to Carson City. It was a very interesting era for me because of being a young kid, and doing the things that young kids used to do. I can recall playing in the capitol building, and one of the favorite sports was to go up to the second floor and slide down the banister, and I have had my backside bumped on many occasions by the

big ball that stands at the balustrade down at the bottom of a staircase. It was there that we became very well acquainted with many of the politicians of the era. I remember especially Will U. Mackey, who was the foreman in the state printer's office and Mr. Joseph Poujade who was a lawyer and referee in bankruptcy, practicing before the supreme court, and lots of the other people whose names have escaped me now.

But I do recall that when I was in the third or fourth grade at the Carson school that the new state library was set up in the octagonal building at the rear of the state capitol, and Mrs. Louise W. Edwards, who was the mother of Dwight and "Bunk," became the first librarian. And it was our job to suggest the books that would be put in the library for the youngsters. And, of course, we got the Tom Swift books, the Rover Boy books, Frank and Dick Merriwell, the O'Henry stories, James Fennimore Cooper—so we had little something to do with the establishment of the state library in Carson City.

Shortly after we got to Carson City, we moved to a place on Second and Minnesota Streets which had a very convenient alcove between the house and the woodshed on the other side away from the house, and a perfect backstop in the back of this alcove where my brother and I used to play baseball. It wasn't more than a day or two after we started playing ball out there that two heads peeked up over the fence to watch us play baseball and we started in talking to the kids, or talking to one of the kids, and he indicated that his brother was deaf and dumb. We couldn't quite understand that, but we finally accepted it; the kids' names were Dowling. And for a period of three years, my brother and I worked with the oldest one, Wilbert, who was the deaf-mute. We finally got him to a point where he could communicate with the

other youngsters. When we first knew him, the only thing he could do was grunt. And through association with us and our trying all the time to teach him how to talk, we finally got him so he could speak several words and make himself understood pretty well. Later, he went to a deaf and dumb school in California and became quite well educated and went on to take care of himself. I've always felt that if it hadn't been for us, the kid never would've gotten anything.

There're so many things that remain in my memory. For instance, the V and T roundhouse in Carson City. Every Saturday, we used to go down and watch the mechanics working on the engines down there. They had anywhere from eight to ten engines in there at one time. They would change engines going up to Virginia City from Carson City and they had to pull out some booster engines to go up over the hill.

And speaking of the Virginia and Truckee railroad, I can always remember the trains that they used to run on the holidays. Reno, Virginia City, and Carson City used to trade holidays. One of 'em would put on the Memorial Day festival; another the Fourth of July; and the other one, Labor Day. And wherever the celebrations were staged, the V and T would run trains to the town. They had long flatcars with benches bolted onto them, no sides on 'em; no nothing. They just had the benches on there, and everybody would get on the train and go wherever they were going—Virginia City or Reno. Going up, it was quite a party because there seemed to be a lot of demijohns underneath the seats of the benches which the men would swig quite frequently, and by the time they got into Virginia City, they would be quite high. Coming back, they used to put on extra guards so that the sleeping boys wouldn't roll off en route to their home.

The celebrations that they put on will stand out in my mind for as long as I live—Virginia City especially—because they used to have fire department drills. The fire department in those days was all hand-drawn. They had no horsedrawn vehicles and the pumper were manned by human manpower, just pumping for all they were worth, to get the water through the hose. They would have contests between the, oh, the Curry Engine Company in Carson City, and there was one other engine company in Carson, Warren Company. And they would go to Virginia City and contest with two or three companies up there. And also, they would have rock drilling contests with single jacks and double jacks. And the Cousin Jacks from Grass Valley and Nevada City would jaunt up there to contest the Nevada miners in these feats of strength and also tugs of war. The celebration always opened with a parade down "C" Street in Virginia City. I can well remember one Fourth of July, we were—my mother, my brother, and I—standing on the portico of the International Hotel and watching the parade. And I can always—I am always proud to—say that I stayed overnight in the famous International Hotel and enjoyed it very immensely.

I also remember when I was in Reno in 1910, they had the Jeffries-Johnson fight in Reno on the Fourth of July. My mother and I went to Reno because my father—being a member of the state police—was sent to Reno to help assist in handling the crowds. And believe me, there were crowds there at that fight! I can remember my mother and I started from Second Street to walk up to the depot on Center Street, where the Golden Hotel stood. And the Golden Hotel was the fight headquarters, and it took us about half an hour to get from Second Street to the depot, just fighting our way through the crowd. The

crowd extended from sidewalk to sidewalk, and just a complete mass of humanity for a whole block.

I can remember also the San Francisco newspapers fighting to see who could get their newspaper to Reno first. But in those days, the only roads over the Sierra Nevada mountains were the ones that the stagecoaches and trucking lines and horse-drawn wagons, trucking vehicles had been driven over, and they were not made for automobiles. But the *Examiner* and the *Chronicle* and the *Call Bulletin* all hired automobiles to bring their papers to Reno. And it was quite a fight to get there first. In fact, one of the more daredevil guys drove his automobile through the snowsheds on the ties going all the way through the snowsheds; and very fortunately, he got through without meeting any trains going the other way.

And I can remember in Reno at the time, on the corner of Second and Virginia Street there was a big, two-story wooden building where the original First National Bank building stands. And on the second floor of this building, was a man by the name of Fred Danne, a very good friend of my family, who had a photographic studio there. It faced right onto Second Street and across the street was the *Nevada State Journal* building where the *Nevada State Journal* was printed. The newspaper had a large rolled piece of canvas that was black. It was a continuous roll that they used for bulletins and for world series ball games. And on the Fourth of July when the fight was on, they used this to give bulletins, and a blow-by-blow account of the fight. And we—my mother and I—were up in the Danne studio watching the fight—the progress of the fight. I was quite impressed, looking back at it now.

My father took me out to Moana Springs where Jim Jeffries was training, and also to

Rick's Resort where Johnson was training. Rick's Resort was out on the old Mayberry ranch property, out on the Truckee River west of town. There was quite a nightclub there in the early days, and this is where Johnson trained. Well, I can recall going up and watching Johnson very busily at work sparring and punching at a bag and doing his roadwork and everything, while up at Moana Springs Jeffries was playing cards and drinking whiskey. And in my estimation, as young as I was, Jeffries never did take the fight seriously. There was a report my father told me about that Johnson, when the fight was signed, had agreed to throw the bout to Jeffries. That was why Jeffries was not training. The day before the fight, Johnson backed out of the agreement and said the white boy would have to take care of himself in the ring. It was quite a shock to everybody in Reno at the time that Johnson won and was the new champion, and immediately, they started to try to find a "white hope." That's where the "white hope" in the boxing fraternity came from.

Back in Carson City, we used to have a ball park at what we knew as Valley Park. It's out in the area that is now occupied by the golf course. They used to have a sort of league; it had Virginia City, Dayton, Carson City, and Reno, and every Sunday they would have a game in one of the four areas.

They had some pretty good ball players. I can remember Dave Schooley who played ball for Dayton; "Dummy" Meyers was with Carson City. Everybody used to go to the ball games. They had no bleachers. But everybody'd drive their rigs up and watch the ball players and the ball game.

I can remember one day my brother and I were coming away from the ball park when we found a horse had broken through a cesspool area and was just fighting for his life, trying to get out of the cesspool area. So,

while I watched the horse—I don't know what I could've done if the horse had started sinking—my brother went for some help. We finally got a couple of cowboys from a ranch near there, and they lassoed the horse and pulled him out of the cesspool.

I also can recall Bill Brougher, who was the son of Wils Brougher. Wils made much of his money in mining in the area, mostly in Tonopah and Goldfield. He had a big house up off of Carson Street to the west, and he had his gang, and the Cahlangs had their gang. We decided to have a rock fight at the Brougher house, and they had raised a flag on the fence around the yard of the house. For about two hours and a half, we fought with rocks back and forth and busted all the windows in the Brougher house—not all of them, but a lot of 'em—and practically tore down the fence. And it was the time when the legislature was in session, and they—all the legislators—came up to the corner to watch the progress of the fight. I don't know who won the fight, but I do know that Jackson White, a colored boy who was one of our gang up there, scaled the fence and tore down the flag. So we decided that we were the winners.

In 1912, we moved back to Reno, and we had the same sort of heartache going from Carson City to Reno as we did going from Reno to Carson City four years earlier. We moved into a house on Elm Street in Reno. The reason I remember the house so well is that in the early spring and summer, my brother and I always used to sleep outside. And there was a walkway between our house and the other house, and we used to sleep outside in this walkway. And I well remember when the Ringling Brothers circus came into Reno and we, sleeping out in this area, got up at four or five o'clock in the morning and went down to the station to watch the circus train come in, then help

take care of the elephants and water them and get a pass to the circus.

We were very fortunate in Reno, as far as entertainment was concerned. Reno was halfway between Salt Lake and San Francisco, and all the traveling shows—circuses as well as drama and stage shows—stopped off in Reno for a one-night stand. The result—we got Ringling Brothers, Sells-Floto, Forepaughs, and all of the big circuses, and I can always remember the cry that went up in the morning parade. Someone would come down the street and yell, “Hold your horses, the elephants are coming!” And it was before there were any automobiles at all on the streets of Reno. It was quite a warning because the horses seeing the elephants would practically go mad. And they had several runaways up there, but nobody was ever seriously hurt.

When we first got back from Carson City, my brother and I were very avid baseball players, and we went to the Humphrey lot which was on Sierra Street, and blocked off Elm Street between Sierra and Virginia Streets. There was a very nice lot, no buildings on it except a barn on the back half of the lot. It made a very fine baseball diamond. So my brother and I started to play “one-eyed cat” down at the ball park, and pretty soon we got two or three other people who came along—Tim Wilson, Ed “Smokey” Williams—and as we played, by the end of the first week, we had enough ball players to make two teams. So we started. We would start playing baseball in the summer, of course, about eight o'clock in the morning and wind up in the dark; have two ball games, one in the morning and one in the afternoon and change pitchers and change around back and forth. There were kids like Beverly Weck and Johnny McInnis, and Floyd Pratt.

Oh, it was the nucleus of what later became the Northwestern Athletic Club.

And it was named Northwestern Athletic Club because it was in the northwest part of town, and it became one of the very famous organizations in the '20's and '30's of Reno. They had basketball teams, football teams, ice hockey teams, baseball teams—whatever sport there was, the Northwestern Athletic Club was always in it, and it became quite a factor in the high school politics. I remember I got kicked out of high school just about my last three weeks of school because one of the members of the Northwestern Athletic Club was running for president of the student body, “Spud” Harrison. And Mr. E. Otis Vaughn, who was the principal, didn't care much for the Northwestern Athletic Club and he put somebody else up to beat Harrison. And then, Mr. Vaughn walked into the bookkeeping department one day and heard me making a political speech, and kicked me out of school. But that's something later.

As I say, we used to have all sorts of sports. In the wintertime we'd start playing hockey on the Manzanita Lake at the University of Nevada—skate all day and then, when the ice became too soft to skate on, we'd just leave our skates on and ride down the hill on the snow and on home. After we left Elm Street, we made our home on Ninth and Lake Street, and it was on the northwest corner of Lake Street, right at the bottom of the hill from the University of Nevada. And across Lake Street was the Evans ranch which now is a city park and site of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity house.

My brother and I were very avid sports fans and used to go up to the University, especially in the fall, to watch the football players get in trim for their coming football games. I can remember a lot of football players in that early time—Harvey “Pongo” McPhail, Joe “Guts” McDonald, George C. “Hungry” Henningsen; I know there are a lot of 'em that

I should remember, but I don't. Reay Mackay was another one. Amos Elliott, who was a very famous football player at the University of California, I think was their first coach there when they were playing rugby. And I can remember a team called the Australian All-Blacks (because of the uniforms they wore) and the Australian Waratahs coming to Reno to play the University of Nevada in rugby. It was quite a deal.

In 1915, when they had the International Exposition in San Francisco, my mother and father said that we could go to the fair, providing we earned our own spending money. And I can remember my brother and myself getting up around six o'clock in the morning selling *Nevada State Journals* on the corner of Second and Virginia Streets. By the time the San Francisco papers came in from California, we'd grab them, and sell them 'til about eleven or twelve o'clock in the morning, go home and have lunch and then come down about two o'clock in the afternoon and sell *Gazettes* until five or six o'clock in the evening. And then that way, we made our own money to go to the San Francisco Exposition.

It was about that time that I became interested in aviation. It was in 1911, I think, that a man by the name of Eugene Ely came to Reno to fly an airplane, and he picked out Belle Isle, which is now Wingfield Park, for his runway. There was a small island right out in the middle of the Truckee River. It wasn't connected with any bridges as it is now. And I've forgotten how we used to get over there; I guess it was by boat, rowboat, or something. But I remember the island real well. It was full of willows and just was nothing but an island until they cleared it off for a runway for Ely. And he had a biplane, a single motor biplane, and he took off from this runway, and he just barely missed the trees at the end of the runway. If he'd hit them, he'd've gone into the

river. Well, he made one circle around Reno and came back and landed. And that was the first airplane flight I had ever seen.

The reason I say this is to get into the San Francisco Exposition. Of course, flying then was something that you didn't do every day, and anybody that went up in the air was a real daredevil. Anybody that did stunts was just practically nuts. When we first went down to San Francisco, Art Smith was one of the fliers that the Fair people had contracted to do exhibition flights. He got up and did loop-the-loops and dives and so forth, that, well, now, they are just—anybody can do it, even an embryo pilot. Then, it was really something. Also, they had a Nicaraguan who was flying a monoplane. Monoplanes, in those days, it was figured they just didn't have the wingspan or the lift to keep in the air. This one did a pretty good job and really thrilled the people that were watching it. I'll get into this aviation thing a little later, because I've known a lot of the early pioneers.

Well, after the fair, we came back, of course, to Reno and were living there. I can recall that at the corner of Second and Virginia Street, there was the Washoe County Bank on the southwest corner of the intersection, and then there were three drugstores, Weck, Cann, and Cheatham. The Weck Drugstore, the Cann Drugstore, and the Cheatham Drugstore. The Byington building, which is still there on the northwest corner, during those days had a wooden sidewalk around the building and it wasn't taken up until the early '20's, I think. Anyway, it was while I was going to college—either late high school or early college. And on the corner of First and Virginia, where the First National Bank building is, the seventeen-story building or whatever it is, this was occupied by a rambling, one-story wooden structure which was the Chinese gambling hall in Reno. And it took in the whole half

block from Virginia Street down towards Center Street. It was a real Chinese gambling joint, fan-tan, Chinese lottery, and all of the games were running there.

On the other side of the alley was a welding shop. Then, of course, on the corner of First and Center was the city hall, a big red brick building with the clock and the tower. The clock never did run after, oh, about 1920, I guess, because in this auto repair shop—a man by the name of John Oliveria ran the shop and he liked to nip every once in a while. So he left his shop one night during the summer—August 1, 1920—and left the welding oxygen running, not lit; it filled the shop with the gas. He came back about three o'clock in the morning and walked in the door and struck a match to find out where the light switch was. The whole shebang blew up. It blew one of the rafters, or one of the pieces of wood, through the face of the clock on the city hall, and that was the end of the clock. It blew him across the street and he landed on the steps of the YMCA building which was right across the street. Outside of being slightly burned, it didn't hurt him.\*

On the corner where the Mapes Hotel is now was the post office building, the federal building. And right in back of the federal building was a long stretch of green grass, and then the YMCA, and on the southwest corner of First and Center was the Nixon Opera House. That's now the Majestic Theater. And as I said earlier, the stage plays stopped off in Reno on their way from Salt Lake to San Francisco, or the other way around, and would put on a one-night stand there. I saw Maud Adams in "Peter Pan," and Kolb and Dill, a comic team, and several others that I can't recall. They used to have what we called "peanut heaven" way up top. The building was a three-story building. "Peanut heaven" was on the third floor, and this was the general

admission deal. You had to stay in the line to be sure you got your tickets. So my brother and I would ditch school; either one of us would ditch school and go down and get our place in line. He'd go in the morning, and I'd go in the afternoon, and we would always be first in line so we got good seats. They had a large chandelier in the center of the theater which had a two-foot air vent in it so that the air could come down through this vent and into the building. And if we couldn't afford the money to get a seat in "peanut heaven," we would climb up on the roof, down in the interior of this chandelier, and watch the play from there. It was very thrilling and sometimes the chandelier would sway back and forth and scare the regular patrons, but it didn't bother us too much.

And then came high school. I went to the Reno High School. Prior to that I was in the Orvis Ring school, which is still there, and I can recall when we came back from Carson City, I entered the fifth grade, and my teacher was Miss Laura B. Miller. In the sixth grade it was Miss Frances Wright; in seventh grade it was Miss Helen Hobbins; in the eighth grade it was the famous and notorious Libby C. Booth. She was the principal and teacher of the eighth grade. And she had taught—when I got there—she had taught people like Pat McCarran and that era, and she taught me, and then was teaching school at least ten years after that—more than that. She was teaching while I was in high school and into college, so it must have been ten or fifteen years before she retired.

But to get back to school, then, I went to high school in the Reno High School building on West Street. It had just been completed a couple of years before I went to school there,

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\*Cf. *Reno Evening Gazette*, August 2, 1920, pp. 1-2.

and it was a very, very fine building. We thought it was the best schoolhouse in the state of Nevada, which it probably was. The superintendent of Reno schools at that time was Benson D. Billinghamurst, and the principal of the high school was B. Otis Vaughn. It was in this era that I grew up, during Prohibition.

In Reno, there was always a more or less social barrier in the Truckee River. All of the very high social people and those of wealth and so forth resided on the south side of the river, and all the common people lived on the north side. On the south side of the river were the Flanigans, the Connells, the Lozanos, the Slaters, and the Bartletts. As a result, in the high school there was some feeling against those who lived on the north side—maybe I should say feelings against those who lived on the south side. One of the greatest triumphs that I ever had in my high school career was when I went out on a date with Margaret Bartlett, who resided on the south side, and finally broke the barrier.

And getting back to the time when I was in high school, I delivered papers for the *Reno Evening Gazette* and at that time, I had the downtown route which included the houses of prostitution; one on Evans Avenue, where they had parlor houses and cribs; at the end of First Street down past the city hall to the east where they had the cribs, also. The Evans Avenue area was known as the Mohawk. And I can recall one Saturday afternoon, I had gone to the Wigwam Theater, which was on Sierra Street and Second Street. I think the theater is still there. As I was coming down the back steps to go to the basement to the *Gazette* building to pick up my papers, I stepped on a nail, and the nail had red paint on it. The nail was driven clear through my tennis shoe and my foot. I pulled the nail out and wrapped a rag around my foot and started on my delivery rounds. The Mohawk was

on toward the latter part of my route, and by the time I got to the Mohawk, I could hardly walk on that foot. One of the girls down there asked me what was the matter, and I told her what had happened, and she said, "You get in there and get your shoe and sock off." And she sent off for some turpentine, and soaked my foot in kerosene and turpentine until the soreness had gone out of it. I was then able to walk and finish my route and go back to the *Gazette* building and get on my bike. I'm sure that the gal saved my foot because, as I say, the nail was a paint-colored nail and some of it could've—most of it came off on my tennis shoe. The nail did go clear through my foot, and it really hurt.

At the time, as I said, the Northwestern Athletic Club was very prominent in high school affairs and the south side kids had an organization known as the Hermits. They formed a baseball team, and in the summer we would play baseball in Bulldog Field, which was right across the street—it was on Court and Arlington—right across the street from the home that Mary Pickford gave to Pat McCarran, when he got her divorce in Reno. Then there was another organization, over in Burke's Addition, and we used to play baseball over there in the area now occupied by the Wooster High School. This was wide open country when we were there) I was captain of the baseball team in Reno High School in my senior year, and we used to play the Indian school, all of the high schools around—Loyalton, Portola, Truckee, and Carson City.

And later, we had a semipro ball club in Reno. Jack Threlkel, who ran the Reno Garage, was the manager of the ball club, and he used to get kids from the high school and college to play ball all summer—semipro baseball. We used to play at Moana Springs and later, Jack built a ball park down on Fourth Street. And I became fairly adept at baseball. One of

my greatest thrills these days is getting hold of Del Webb and telling how I used to chase him all over the semipro baseball circuit when he was playing for Reno and Sacramento and that area. He had either just left or was just coming when I was coming or just left. I did play one ball game with him in Reno. And now, he, of course, is president of the Del E. Webb organization, building hotels and he has a little more money than I have, and I don't know whether he made it playing ball or how, but—.

During the time that I was in high school, I can remember teachers like Miss Alwine Sielaff, Effie Mona Mack, who taught me American history and later became an author of books on history. My bookkeeping teacher was Miss Zetta Underwood. remember my English teacher was Miss Alma Belt. I remember the bookkeeping teacher was a very nice-looking and very charming young lady. I don't think she was more than three or four years older than the seniors in high school. This was her first teaching assignment.

And I can recall, the latter part of my senior year, I was pledged secretly to Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, of which my brother was a member. My father also was a member, and he was the founder of THPO, the local fraternity, which went SAE nationally. So the whole family became members of SAE. My nephew is also an SAE—my brother's son—and then two other nephews, Mike and Jerry Merrill on my wife's side, also are members of SAE. All of 'em were at the University of Nevada.

Then in 1920, I enrolled at the University of Nevada. told you I got kicked out of high school when I was a senior and did not graduate at that time.

At the time, the University of Nevada had a classification of "special student," for which you had to be eighteen years old and

have at least fifteen credits of high school. was seventeen and I had the fifteen credits. All I lacked was a quarter of a credit of the sixteen necessary to get me into the University, so I told a little white lie and said I was eighteen years old. It got me in trouble about thirty years later. I tried to get a birth certificate, never having had one because they didn't record births legally in Washoe County; at least it wasn't required at the time I was born. So I started to get the delayed birth certificate, and I had an awful tough time trying to prove my age, or that I even was born in the state of Nevada. One of the reasons was when the 1910 U. S. Census—when I was eight years old, my mother gave the census taker the correct information, but in the 1920 Census, when I was eighteen years old, my father gave them the information, and the two didn't jibe. My mother gave my right birthday in 1910, but my father said, "Oh, I guess he's sixteen, seventeen. Put it on there seventeen." So it was a year off. So that added a little confusion to my birth records, So then I went to the University of Nevada records and found out that one year made an awful lot of difference, and I couldn't prove it, that I was born in Reno in 1902. The insurance records that I had were correct. So finally, I got the delayed birth certificate, but it took a lot of doing, and mainly because of the misinformation I gave the University of Nevada about my birth.

But anyway, when I went to the University of Nevada, Prohibition was just in its second year. And incidentally, I can remember when Prohibition came to the United States, the state of Nevada went dry about a year before the rest of the United States, when Nevada passed the repealer—I mean the Prohibition Act—it also passed a Volstead Act of its own. And the state went dry before the rest of the United States went dry. Then 1918, the rest of the United States went dry, and California

was one of the states that went dry along with the entire U. S.

And Nevada being dry, the night that Prohibition was to take effect in California, everybody from Reno went up to Truckee. And if anybody ever saw a party to end all parties, it was that Prohibition night in Truckee. I can remember, we were only high school kids, and I can recall, oh, guys like Bert Gibbons, Matt Walsh, Jimmy Morrison, myself, drove a car up to Truckee over Dog Valley grade, which was one of the worst grades in the United States outside of the Kings Canyon grade going up to Lake Tahoe. In Truckee, we would go up the street, ordering one type of drink, and come back down ordering another type of drink. Along about eleven o'clock, we were pretty well stoned! We did manage to sober up enough to see the twelve o'clock session, where bartenders were loading cases of booze on the bars, and auctioning them off to the highest bidder because they were sure that Prohibition was going to be—going to take effect and there would be no more liquor in the United States. I can remember you could've got cases of whiskey for a dollar, two and a half at the most. People just bought the liquor and put it in the back of their automobiles and headed back to Reno. It was the wildest bust of all busts that I have ever known of in all my life.

So we get back to the University of Nevada. When I went to the University of Nevada, I started in 1920. It was that time that they had the—probably the—finest football team that was ever known at the University of Nevada. It was—well, Jimmy Bradshaw was the quarterback, Homer "Windy" Johnson was the fullback, Jack Howard was center, "Molly" Malone was playing one of the tackles, Mahlon "Tiny" Fairchild was one of the guards, his brother, Ted, was one of the ends, Bill Martin was an end, George "Horse"

Hobbs was an end. And that was the ball club that set the highest scoring record on two successive Saturdays. They played Saint Ignatius one Saturday and beat them 102-0, and they played the Mare Island sailors the next Saturday and beat them 137-0. Those were the two highest scoring games that were ever produced by one football team.

Jimmy Bradshaw was probably one of the finest football players I ever saw. He played four years and took one timeout for an injury in all of those four years. He weighed about 155 pounds, was a beautiful broken field runner. He practically single-handedly tied Stanford, I think it was 1921. The score was tied with about three minutes left to go, mainly because Jimmy Bradshaw had run back a punt of some seventy-five yards—it was played down at Stanford. And the second touchdown, Nevada had Bradshaw pass to Ed Reed, who played halfback, and tied the score 14-14, with about three minutes left to play. Bradshaw asked the timekeeper how much time he had, and he told him three minutes. Instead of three minutes, they had two minutes to play, and he wound up on the five-yard line instead of across the goal line. He should've had that other minute, and he would've won the ball game. But it was quite a deal, and a real thrill to those of us who saw it.

I can recall that during the Prohibition era there was a place in Reno, named the "Busy Bee," which was down on Commercial Row between Lake Street and Center Street. This was the SAE "study hall." we'd go down and do our studying down there from four o'clock in the afternoon and then start in drinking beer and gin. Not every afternoon, but quite often.

I graduated from the University of Nevada in 1926. I stayed out one semester, and worked at the Standard Oil Company in Richmond, California, with the idea that I was going to try out for the Oakland Oaks baseball team in the

Pacific Coast League, but I got so homesick that I decided that I'd come back and go to the University. So I did. I should have graduated in 1924, but I graduated in 1926.

While I was going to college, I enrolled originally as an electrical engineer and I thought that this would be what I wanted. But I found out that, in the first place, my mathematics would never carry me through the four years of engineering, and in the second place, the afternoon lab courses which lasted until four-thirty in the afternoon were not for me when I used to see my girl being courted by other people on the quadrangle—the other people being enrolled in Arts and Science. So I decided that I would transfer to Arts and Science, and I had had a little experience in writing for the University *Sagebrush*, the weekly paper—writing sports. So I decided I would transfer to journalism.

During the time I was in the electrical engineering curriculum, I took chemistry. And if there was ever one subject that I never could understand it was chemistry! I was tutored by one of the best chemists in Reno; the fact of the matter is he taught school—taught the chemistry courses at the University of Nevada—and was in the drug business in Reno, N. E. Wilson, of the Wilson Drug Company. As I say, he was one of the best chemists I knew of, and he tutored me, and after the first couple of weeks, he just said, "John, you're not going to learn this stuff. You never will. You've got a mental block or something." So I went to Dean Adams who was the Dean of Education. And I said, "Dr. Adams, if you want me to stay in the University of Nevada for the rest of my life, just make me take chemistry." I said, "I'll never be able to pass it, and I can't learn it, I've done everything I can, I'm not going to use it as a part of my journalism course. I'd like to get that flunk removed." You couldn't graduate

at the time if you had flunked any course and hadn't made it up. So, very generously, he removed the flunk, and I finally was graduated.

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## A CAREER IN JOURNALISM: OVERVIEW

In the spring and summer of 1926, I went back to California, the Bay area, and haunted the newspapers down there for months and months trying, and I couldn't even get in to see a managing editor. So I finally decided that I'd go back to Reno and see what could happen there. I got back to Reno about the latter part of September.

The World Series starts usually in the latter part of September, the early part of October. Joe McDonald, who was the general manager for the *Nevada State Journal* at the time, had recalled that during the latter part of my time at the University I had announced World Series ball games for the Journal in front of the old Grand Theater, which is where the Arcade is now. I used to have a set of earphones on, and I had the megaphone. I would get the play-by-play account from a telephone conversation with the guy that was taking the play-by-play over the Morse telegraph instrument over in the Journal building and relayed it to me. Then I would announce it to the crowd there on Virginia Street. We used to have crowds, oh, of several thousand people

there—stopped traffic. They'd have to reroute traffic around Virginia Street, because of the crowds. And I did that for about two years while in college. As I was going to say, about that time the World Series was coming along in 1926, and Joe McDonald Wired me, not for my ability as a sportswriter or anything, but for my announcing ability. So, my voice got me into the newspaper business, really. And I became sports reporter for the Journal in that year.

I can always remember, one of my chief jobs was to keep the Associated Press Morse telegraph operator in whiskey. And it was then that I started in becoming acquainted with the bootleggers. When I came on in the afternoon, I would have to go over to "Shorty" King's bootleggin' joint, in the alley in back of what is now Harrah's Club. This was quite an elaborate bootlegging joint. It had nightclub entertainment and buffet dinners, and naturally, the prohibited liquid. I would have to go over and pick up a mickey of liquor—mickey is a half-pint—to take back to the AP operator and then have to go back

about ten o'clock to get another one for him, to keep him happy.

At that time, Osborne T. Buck was managing editor of the *Journal*, and Orrin Davie was the advertising manager. The newspaper was owned by James G. Scrugham, who was governor, and later congressman, and United States Senator of Nevada.

It was about that time also that I became further interested in the aviation picture. While I was in high school, they had a transcontinental race between New York City and San Francisco. And a fellow by the nickname of the "Flying Parson"—I've forgotten what his real name was, but he was known as the "Flying Parson" because he was a minister and a flying enthusiast—he came into Reno and landed about where the airport is now. It was a cattle ranch at the time. And they landed—the planes landed in the pasture there, because it was fairly smooth and they could get down, and get up. When the "Flying Parson" came in, he had broken a lot of strut wires on his biplane. (For those that are not familiar with biplanes, they have three or four wooden pieces that ran between the two wings and then wire that connected the two struts, in a sort of a cross deal between the struts.) And he had broken a couple of those things so we went out to cut down some barbed wire and fixed up his struts, so that he could get over the Sierra Nevada mountains. Apparently he made it, because he won the prize. But I never heard of him after that.

And about that time, about the time that I went to work for the *Journal*, the Boeing airplane outfit won a contract for air mail between Salt Lake City and San Francisco. Being in the newspaper business, I went out to see about the planes as they came in at Blanch Field—and that was out on, oh, it was out by the old country club, and by Moana Road. This was where they landed and took

off. I became very well acquainted with Monte Mouton, Clair Vance, Blanchfield himself.

Blanchfield was killed in Reno. It was a veteran that was being buried, and Blanchfield was going up to drop some flowers over the grave, but it was a terribly windy day. He dropped the flowers, came down too low, and the wind caught him, and dropped him down onto some houses on Ralston Street, just west of the cemetery.

So I became more interested in aviation knowing these people and the pioneers that they were. I remember talking to Clair Vance shortly after he had made a landing on Mission Street in San Francisco. He got up over San Francisco and the engine conked out on him, and he knew he had to land. So he side-slipped in between the telegraph and trolley car high-tension wires, and landed on Mission Street—downtown, practically. It landed safely; the plane was sort of badly battered but he got out all right.

Then it was about this time that Hiney Cooper interested me in the 20-30 Club. He had been appointed the Nevada representative of the 20-30 Club to organize clubs in the area. He got hold of me and several other young people in Reno and organized the first 20-30 Club in the state of Nevada. And it was about this time also that I became a charter member of the local Demolay Masonic fraternity in Reno. It was the first Demolay club in the state, and I became interested in that.

It was while I was in Reno, that there was a tong murder in which one of the—I think it was the—Hip Sing tong that was killed. One of the hatchet men who was accused of the slaying was Hughy Sing. Hughy was in the Carson City grammar school with me, and I sat right behind him for at least two years. Then I lost track of him. One morning when I was on the *Journal*, there was a story broke about a Chinese who was killed near the New

York Cafe, which was down on Lake Street near the cribs. It was decided that he was the victim of a tong—a rival tong. Hughy was a young kid, and it was his first time around as a tong hatchet man, and they—the jury—decided that—(what the dickens was the other guy's name?)—the other, older man, whose name is in the archives, but which I cannot remember at the moment, was responsible for the slaying. He was sentenced to death in the prison as the first man to get the gas, which had been approved by the legislature as a method of dispatching criminals—the death penalty approved just a year before. Hughy was given a life sentence and was very prominent as the chef for several of the wardens who were at the Nevada State Prison during his time. He was paroled several years ago, and I have completely lost track of him, although at the time, he was a very good friend of mine, and also was during the time just prior to when I went to work for the *Journal* in Reno. In fact, I guess it was when I was in my last year in college.

Somebody got the big idea of putting an exposition on in Reno, to dedicate the finishing of the Lincoln Highway across the United States. I can well recall the big whoop and hoorah that went on prior to the staging of the exposition in Reno at Idlewild Park. One of the big pre-events was a special train from Reno to San Francisco which was occupied by most of the leaders from Reno who went to San Francisco and staged a great parade up Market Street and over into Oakland in the afternoon. It was a great whoop and hoorah, and was supposed to bring about a huge exposition in the city of Reno. But the only thing that it did was to get the state of California to build a building which still remains standing in Idlewild Park. Nevada made a token presentation at the fair, and you can imagine how much it impressed

most of the people, when I can't remember any of the circumstances that went on during the fair, if it was ever held. It was an idea that just didn't jell.

I might say also that it was while I was working for the *Nevada State Journal* that I first became acquainted with Charles H. Lindbergh. It was announced that Lindbergh would make his triumphal flight across the United States, and one of his stops would be in Reno. As I had been at the city council meeting which discussed the welcome for Lindbergh, I was put on the committee to plan the welcome. I can well remember when Lindbergh came to the city. He landed at Blanch Field out where the United Air Lines planes used to land, on a small field there. The "Spirit of St. Louis" was so constructed that once the pilot got down anywhere near the level of land, he could not see underneath. When he came in—when Lindbergh came in—to land, he slightly overshot the field and wound up about five inches away from the wire fence which separated the field from the highway. While he stopped in time, there were many of the people on the welcoming committee who were a bit skeptical as to whether he'd be able to climb out of the plane. It was the largest crowd I have seen (or had seen since 1910, the Jeffries-Johnson fight), that welcomed Lindbergh. He was taken to downtown Reno, where he made a speech and later went up to the Riverside Hotel where he was interviewed by the press of the area, among whom was Cornelius Vanderbilt, who later became editor of the *Illustrated Daily News* in Los Angeles and was a member of the famous Vanderbilt family. (Vanderbilt was in Reno to get a divorce and subsequently to marry another girl from Reno.)

It was quite interesting to meet Lindbergh on the first occasion, and I met him again about a year later when he was flying as a

public relations man for one of the airplane manufacturers and stopped in Reno. I had an opportunity to talk to him for an hour or so when he was waiting for his plane to be refueled and to go on to San Francisco. He was a very unassuming sort of a guy—he never felt he was anything more than an airmail pilot, and he only had a lot of luck to make the trip across the Atlantic. Of course, everyone knows that it was his flight across the Atlantic that gave the big boost to aviation. That is another step along the road that I took toward the development of aviation in the United States.

It was also during the time that I was working for the *Journal* in Reno that the divorce law was changed by the legislature. The first divorce law that was in the state of Nevada made it mandatory to maintain residence for six months. Then later, it came down to three months, and then to six weeks. This was occasioned by the fact that there were several other states that were getting in on the Reno and Nevada divorce industry, namely Montana, Arkansas, and later, Florida. The people in the city of Reno and the state of Nevada—of course, the city of Reno was considered the divorce capital of Nevada for many years—were inclined to believe that shortening the divorce time would cost the merchants of the city money because of the less time that they would have to stay here. However, the attorney put the counter claim in that there would be twice or three times the amount of divorces granted in the city of Reno at six weeks than at three months. They finally convinced the legislature to do some looking into the fact, and it proved out to be so.

Probably one of the greatest divorce judges in Reno was George Bartlett, who used to do little else but sit on the bench as a divorce judge and grind them out, one

every three or four minutes. I was quite well acquainted with George Bartlett, and he was quite a gentleman. He affected a Southern goatee and mustache for much of his later days, and was quite a distinguished figure at the courthouse. He always took a personal interest in every divorce that was granted, especially if the young lady might be good-looking, and had a little money. Not that George ever got any of the money, but he liked to be entertained. And after the divorces were granted, he was entertained quite royally. He wrote several books and gave his theories on divorce which were quite interesting, to say the least. It was then that the myth [began] of the women going from the courthouse to the Truckee River bridge and throwing their wedding rings into the river to celebrate their marital ties being severed. I never was able to find anyone who ever found a ring in the river, but at made a real good story.

Nobody ever could live in the city of Reno without having some exposure to George Wingfield. Wingfield came out of Tonopah and Goldfield and into the Reno area about 1910. My father knew him in Goldfield, and in the gold camp, Wingfield was always accompanied by a bodyguard; one of the bodyguards was "Diamondfield Jack" Davis, who kept Wingfield out of trouble whenever any developed. However, Wingfield was not anywhere near a coward. My dad told me at one time during the IWW strike at Goldfield that there was an organizer standing in front of one of the hotels berating Wingfield and telling the crowd that if Wingfield showed up, he would kill him. Wingfield stepped out of the crowd and told the man he was available, and to go ahead and kill him. The organizer backed down and, that evening, left the premises for parts unknown. So Wingfield was not at all bashful of backing off from a fight.

And wherever you saw Wingfield, somewhere nearby were Bill Graham and Jimmy McKay. I am not certain when the relationship among the three became as personal as it was, but when I was first cognizant of it in Reno, they were well established.

Wingfield, of course, was the political leader of the state of Nevada because of his banking interests and the fact that he controlled both the Republicans and Democrats. Bill Woodburn—who was a partner in the law firm of Woodburn and Thatcher, which represented Wingfield—Woodburn was the national committeeman for the Democratic Party. So, Wingfield, whose offices were right across the hall from Thatcher and Woodburn in the First National Bank building—which at the time I think was owned by Wingfield. I've forgotten what the name of it was, but it is on the corner of Second and Virginia Streets. Wingfield's offices were' right across the hall from the Thatcher and Woodburn suite of offices. Any time any political plums had to be picked, Wingfield would send them in to either Woodburn or Thatcher, depending upon their politics.

I never did see McKay and Graham do anything more than hang around gambling institutions. Gambling was not legal in Reno during the time that I am most familiar with it. There were poker games and panguingue games, and several other card games that were allowed to flourish in the Reno area. McKay and Graham and Sullivan were the card kings of the city of Reno.

In addition, there was a nightclub at the old Rick's Resort which was known as the "Willows." It was run by a man by the name of Hall. He was one of McKay's and Graham's henchmen, and also operated the Court Apartments on Center Street. The building in which the apartments were located was the

old Frank Golden home, which was moved on to Center Street from Mill Street, right where the Holiday Hotel is now. In addition to Hall, "Shorty" King was operating the bar, and Hall operated the gambling and the restaurant. It was quite a hangout for all of the people during the Prohibition era, and they had floor shows. The big social events were held at the Willows.

In some manner, McKay and Graham got mixed up in a horseracing-swindle deal. Ted Carville was the United States Attorney at the time, when the complaint was made by the people who were reportedly fleeced by McKay and Graham. These people had their money in a safety deposit box at the Riverside Bank, of which Roy Frisch was the chief executive officer. Frisch's direct underling, Carl Feutsch, knew the details of the fleecing with the exception of the actual withdrawal of funds from the safety deposit box. Frisch was the only one, outside of McKay and Graham, that knew of the actual withdrawal and the amount withdrawn.

McKay and Graham were indicted, but before the indictment, someone attempted to get Frisch and Feutsch to change their testimony. They were not so afraid of Feutsch as they were of Frisch. One night when Frisch had been to the theater and was going home, he was seen going around the corner of the courthouse on Court Street and started toward his house which was up at Court Street and Arlington Avenue. He never arrived home. Ever since that time, there have been many searches made for his body, but it never has been found.

Some witnesses in Reno said that just prior to the time that Frisch disappeared, "Machinegun" Kelly, a Chicago racketeer, was seen in Reno and was chased out the back door of a garage in Reno, and disappeared. He later was supposed to be hiding out at the

Mt. Grant Hotel on Walker Lake, but this was never verified. It was alleged by many people in Reno that Kelly was brought to Reno by perhaps McKay, Graham, and/or Wingfield, but this was never proved.

McKay and Graham were indicted by the grand jury and found guilty of mail fraud and were sentenced and served time in the federal penitentiary.

Shortly after McKay and Graham were indicted and were awaiting trial, I had written two or three columns about McKay and Graham in the *Nevada State Journal* and the *Review-Journal*, and had labeled them "Billy the Kid" Graham and "Jimmy the Cinch" McKay, and castigated them for descending to the levels of hoodlums. I was at Santa Anita racetrack at the first Santa Anita Handicap—Santa Anita Derby—and I was going up the stairs from the betting ring and coming down the stairs was McKay. He stopped me and grabbed ahold of my coat lapels and said, "God damn you, Johnny, I've known your father a long time, and what do you mean by giving me the treatment you gave me in the newspapers? I will get to you later." With that threat, he left me. However, I guess, after spending some time in the federal penitentiary, he became a little calmer and more charitable, and the next time I saw him in Reno after he had been through the—served the sentence—he was very cheerful, and we renewed our old friendship.

As far as Graham was concerned, he was always a very good friend of mine, and in his later years when he was in the Mapes Hotel in Reno, I stopped on many occasions and we visited and recalled the old days—the bootlegging days, the day that he shot the man in the New Market Club in Lincoln Alley and was never convicted. The coroner's jury ruled it was in self-defense, and Graham was never prosecuted.

Getting back to the *Nevada State Journal*, when I was on the *Journal*, picking up a few loose ends of this thing as it moves along, we had quite a staff. As I mentioned before, Osborne T. Buck was the editor of the paper, and Buck became quite an alcoholic. I can remember that Buck and I—because I was the cub reporter on the paper—I was supposed to stick until the paper was out and read proof. I can remember Buck, sitting on a big wastepaper barrel, drinking whiskey, and about nine or nine-thirty, falling into the wastepaper barrel so only his feet and his hands showed. He passed out, and I was forced to get out the newspaper. That's how I became the editor of the *Nevada State Journal*. We had quite a staff: Florence Bovett, who for so long was part of the home economics or the Agricultural Extension agency, was one of the columnists that wrote the agricultural page; Jack Bell was a reporter—he was an old time reporter from Chicago or New York and had come to Reno to retire and was working on the *Journal* at the time I was. Then there was A. J. Moore, a very nice and kindly old man who had gone through the Tonopah and Goldfield booms, and Rhyolite, and all of those booms in that era, who was the mining editor; and then "Smiles" Greenwalt—Ernie Greenwalt—who had gone to the University of Nevada, and graduated, was on the news staff, as was Stan Bailey, who was a real Nevada boy and had gone through grammar school, high school, and the University of Nevada. Those were the people that worked on the *Journal* at the time I was there.

I got into the *Journal* just after Scrugham had purchased it. It had been previously operated by Mrs. Boyle—Mrs. Emmet D. Boyle—and she had not been very successful. She was in failing health so she decided to sell it and Jim Scrugham bought it. That was, let's see, just after, I think, yes, just after he had

been defeated for reelection by Fred Balzar. Scrugham was not too much interested in the publishing of a newspaper. He was more interested in getting his three-volume history of the state of Nevada together, and used to come down to his office and spend hours and hours. He'd come down at maybe eight or nine o'clock in the morning and wouldn't go home 'til ten or eleven o'clock at night. Any time that there was anything that needed editorial comment, he would tell Buck, "Well, you go ahead and write the editorial." And as a result, the strength of the *Journal* was not too great at that time. It went down, stature-wise, even under MacLennan, whom I will mention later. He remained there only three or four months, and from then, I don't know, the *Journal* kind of shifted from hand to hand, and finally was enveloped in the Reno Newspapers, and is now part of the Reno Newspapers.

It was sometime earlier also that there was a surging of interest in automobiles. The whole United States was coming out of the horse and buggy stages and into the automobile era. Where there were blacksmiths, they turned themselves into automobile repairmen, and there were very few people in the city of Reno that understood a gasoline motor. They learned by hit and miss proposition. One of the greatest things that ever hit the United States, for that matter, was when Ford made his Model A—brought out his Model A Ford. That was the one that put America on wheels. And I can well remember that Myron "Paddy" Doyle and his brother had the Ford Agency up on Virginia Street about, oh, between Fourth and Fifth. When the Model A came out, that was when all the dealers started in making money, and the Doyles surely did.

Well, I might get back to the city council in Reno when I was there from 1926 to 1929. The boss of the city council was William "Rags" Justi. He ran a bar down on Lake

and Second Streets and was the councilman from Ward I, which was the downtown area of the city of Reno. And Justi was the man who put out all of the special political favors from the city.

Ed Roberts was mayor at the time, and he had been a congressman from the state of Nevada. If there was anybody that looked like a congressman, it was Ed Roberts. He always walked down the street, and always appeared on the street in a frock coat with a big heavy gold chain draped across the front of his vest, and carried a cane, and wore a derby hat, which was quite a deal in Reno because very few people ever saw derby hats in Reno. It was like spats. I don't know that Ed ever wore spats, I think he did, but I wouldn't say so for sure. But he was quite a dandy. During Prohibition, the city council was talking about how the Prohibition law was not being enforced in the city of Reno. And Ed said, "It'd be all right with me; I will put a barrel of whiskey on each corner of the downtown area and the tourists can come up and I'll give 'em a tin cup, and they can drink the whiskey out of the barrels. That's how much we think of Prohibition in the state of Nevada," which was just about right, because Nevada never did accept Prohibition; after the first month, it just died down and nobody paid any attention to it.

As I have said, the Reno area was controlled by George Wingfield, Woodburn, and Thatcher, and the Prohibition agents had no opportunity to enforce the laws in Reno because of the political pressure that was put on them. In the rest of the state of Nevada, the distances were so far that there was an "early warning system," so called, to let all of the bootleggers around the state know when the Prohibition agents were coming in. In Las Vegas, the boys used to get at least a day's notice that they were coming in, and

by the time the agents got in to Las Vegas, there was no whiskey in sight, no liquor in sight, everything was closed up. The same thing went for Tonopah and Goldfield, and all the way along, because you must remember, that in those days, there were no paved roads between Reno and Las Vegas—the last pavement ran out either at Fallon or Yerington. And from then on, you were on your own. It'd usually take you two days to get between Fallon and Las Vegas, and that was plenty of time to warn the people that the "prohi's" were on their way.

In 1929, Scrugham sold the *Journal* to a man by the name of Arthur MacLennan. At that time I had become editor, ex officio, of the *Journal* because Mr. Buck had become quite an alcoholic and was not able to carry on. I might say that one of the last acts of his newspaper career in Reno was that he was covering the legislature in Carson City, and started back to Reno and ran off the road somewhere in Washoe Valley and busted himself up. I mean, he wasn't terribly hurt, but he was skinned and bruised and everything, and he came into the *Journal* about eleven o'clock the night that the legislature adjourned and wrote his story, and had the legislature closed up with no great fanfare or anything. So the next afternoon, the *Gazette* came out with the story that the legislature at its last session, which Buck was supposed to cover, had re-legalized gambling in the state of Nevada. So this was one story that Mr. Buck missed and he also missed his job the next day.

But Scrugham sold the newspaper in 1929 to MacLennan and being the editor of the newspaper—it is tradition that whenever any new publisher is in the act, he chooses his own editor. So rather than tell me that I was fired, Mr. MacLennan told me to take two weeks' vacation and come back at the end of two weeks and then see what we

could work out. Well, after the end of the first week, I went down to Mr. MacLennan, and Mr. MacLennan told me that he never promised me anything of this sort, and that I was *through*!

So about that time, the *Review-Journal*, of which my brother was half-owner, and had been since 1926, was figuring on going daily. It was a tri-weekly at the time, and they planned to go daily. In the next few months, my brother notified me to come down—if I'd like to—and go to work here (in Las Vegas). I told him as far as I was concerned, sure, I'd come to Las Vegas and stay for a year 'til I got on my feet—having been married just a few months before, and his offer of fifty dollars a week was quite a step. So I said I'd come down and go to work down here, until I could get into something in Los Angeles or New York, or someplace. I had big ideas as to what kind of newspaperman I was.

So I made the first airplane flight between Reno and Las Vegas, with a guy by the name of Ray Boggs, who had ideas of setting up an airplane route between Reno and Las Vegas. He also had a mining claim down in Carrara. So they were coming down. Roscoe Turner, a famous flier who was quite a character as far as flying was concerned, was the pilot. He was hired by Gilmore—Gilmore Oil Company to publicize their products. Turner had a very dashing powder blue uniform, and had a lion cub on a leash that he took with him wherever he went. The cub flew in the plane with him and then he would walk up and down the street with the cub on a leash. Oh, a dashing guy. He had a waxed mustache, very handsome. He flew the plane from Reno to Las Vegas, and back again, of course. It was a Lockheed-Vega. Those Lockheed-Vegas land at a very fast rate—or did land at a fast rate. We got over Las Vegas to land here and the field was about where the Sahara Hotel

is now. It was a small field, and it was being used by the Western Air Lines on their flights from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City with the mail. Turner was a real good flier after he got the plane up in the air, and when he tried to land in Vegas he overshot the field out here three times. This being my first venture in an airplane, I tell you, I wasn't very happy.

But we finally landed, and I came into town and went up to see my brother and the plant at the *Review-Journal*—or it was the *Review* at that time, the *Clark County Review*—to see the plant that they had. It was in a flat-roofed, one-story building. The front was all glass. And on one side of the building was a real estate office. On the other side was the business office of the *Review-Journal*. That was at 113 south First Street. And in the rear of the building, there were two linotype machines where the newspaper was made up. And no ventilation whatever in the building. The only way we could get ventilated was to open the door—both doors—and see if a breezed come through. And one of the old wooden-bladed fans, going around lazily in the air. Well, this was about April when I came down to Las Vegas on that trip, and it wasn't too warm. We had left Reno, oh, I guess it was around forty in Reno, and when we got down here, it was about seventy-five. So it was quite warm as far as we were concerned.

But we made the arrangements for me to come down to Las Vegas from Reno, and we flew back stopping en route at Carrara. At Carrara, they had a one-way landing strip. It was just a strip that was cleaned out of the desert—cleared the brush and the larger boulders. Mr. Boggs wanted to see what was happening to his mine. So Turner tried to hit the strip, and he overshot that a couple times, and then when he finally did come down, a gust of wind hit us, and I would swear, that as we were coming in, the wing tip of the plane

on the side that I was in scraped the paint on the ground. But we finally did get down. And Boggs went to his mine and came back, and we went back up to Reno. And Turner even overshot the field in Reno! And finally we got down there. That was my first experience with riding an airplane. Nevertheless, I still maintained my interest in aviation, as you will see later.

I came back to Las Vegas the latter part of April or the first part of May. At that time, Las Vegas had a population of about five thousand people. I came from Reno with Percy Nash, who had been a prohibition agent in Reno and who had also been on the police force there. He was coming down here to take over the job of chief of police in Las Vegas. At that time, in 1929, of course, they were looking forward in Las Vegas toward the construction of Boulder Dam. And at that time, the Boulder Dam bill had been passed—the Swing-Johnson bill had been passed—in the Congress. But no funds had been allocated, and they were looking ahead here to the time when this construction would start.

I might say that it has been the routine of the people in the city of Las Vegas to look ahead and be prepared for what's coming along. This was indicated even at that time when the city commission decided to set up a police force in Las Vegas to take care of the influx of people that was expected here. Prior to that time, they had what they called a constable who rode a horse around the streets of Las Vegas at night and no police protection at all in the daytime. Of course, they didn't need any because, with a population of five thousand people, and everybody knew everybody else and everybody knew where everybody else was at any given time in the day. If anybody did come in here and start a burglary spree or bank robbery or anything, there wasn't any way he could get out of town,

because there were only three ways out of town—one was toward Reno, the other was toward Salt Lake City, and the other one was toward Los Angeles. And if anybody came in here, and wanted to get away, they could be caught, either at Mesquite, Beatty, or Barstow, because the roads, in those days, were not paved, they didn't have any airplanes, and when somebody left town, they used to have to take a supply of water and a couple of extra tires, and so forth and so on, so they couldn't get very far before somebody'd catch 'em. And we never had any crime problems, even during Boulder Dam days. No crime problems at all because of the fact that it was so tough to get out of here.

So when I got to Las Vegas, they were starting a road—or a street—project in Las Vegas. Fremont Street was the paved street in the community when I came down here. They had just started an assessment district over on Carson and Bridger Streets, and Koebig and Koebig were the contractors on the project. At that time, the engineers tried to change the entire drainage of Las Vegas. There were people that said that the only reason they did this was because of the profit that was available in excavation. So, from Main Street down to Fifth Street, and on Carson and Bridger Streets, they excavated about three feet down for the paving. And for many years, they had a three-foot curbing on Carson and Bridger Streets, and it still—or, until the federal building was built over on Fourth street, we still had the high curbs. And this was one of the biggest scandals that rocked the community in Those early days. However, nobody ever proved that there was anything that was wrong with it. There was nobody that was ever prosecuted, or anything of that sort.

The mayor of Las Vegas was Fred Hesse, who was brought here originally by the Stetson family, of the Stetson hat outfit. It

was planned to put in a dam on the Colorado River, by private financing, and Mr. Hesse was sent in here—to do this early survey work. Well, World War I came along, and just put the kibosh on the private enterprise dam. Mr. Hesse remained here, and he later was elected mayor. Very highly regarded and highly respected person in Las Vegas. Then the city commissioners, if I can remember them, were Roscoe Thomas, who had a haberdashery store in Las Vegas and later became a partner in the Golden Nugget; Bill German, who was connected with the Union Pacific Railroad as a telegrapher; and Lon Hansell, who was a railroad man—I think he was an engineer; and O. J. Smith, who ran the laundry over on Main Street where the—let's see, I guess it's the Mint—Mint parking lot is now, across the street from Cashman's garage. They were the commissioners when I first came to Las Vegas.

As the one-man news staff of the *Review-Journal*, I became very well acquainted with all of the local politicians, and most of those who represented the state of Nevada. When I was in Carson City, I told you that I knew Governor John Sparks, and when he died, Denver Dickerson, who was the lieutenant governor, went in as governor. Then there was Tasker L. Oddie, who came out of Tonopah and Goldfield to become governor, and later, a United States Senator. And Emmet D. Boyle, who was governor and later became publisher of the *Nevada State Journal* in Reno. And Jim Scrugham, who was an engineering professor at the University of Nevada before he decided to run for governor, and was elected, and later became Congressman and Senator, of course. And then Fred Balzar, who was a conductor on the shortline railroad down around Hawthorne and later became sheriff and then was elected governor. That was the year—Balzar's year—was the year that Scrugham was confronted with the big

Cole-Malley defalcation in the treasurer and controller's office. Malley was the treasurer, and Cole was the controller. Between the two of them, they started borrowing money from the state coffers to put in oil wells in Texas. And the deeper the oil wells went, the deeper they got into debt with the state of Nevada. It became the only scandal that happened openly in the state of Nevada. It was a defalcation of many thousands of dollars. And Cole and Malley went to prison but were paroled after only a short time in prison, and Malley went to California. I think Cole stuck around the state of Nevada, but I lost track of him. Scrugham was defeated by Balzar because of that big scandal. Then Griswold who was Morley Griswold from Elko—who was lieutenant governor, took over from Balzar, who died in office. And then Dick Kirman from Reno followed him; Ted Carville from Elko followed him; and then, of course, Vail Pittman, Charlie Russell, and Grant Sawyer. I was very personally acquainted with all of them except John Sparks, who, you might say, knew me, but I didn't know him very well because I was so young when I was in Carson City.

But it was while I was in Las Vegas that my acquaintanceship, or my friendship, with all the types of people I told you about at the start of this little piece of history, came of age. The Presidents I knew—Herbert Hoover, who, of course, came to Las Vegas for the start of Boulder, later called Hoover Dam; Franklin D. Roosevelt, who came here for the dedication of the dam (and incidentally, I have the pitcher and the two glasses that were used by Roosevelt at the dedication of the dam at my home now); Harry S. Truman, who came here originally with the Truman war profits investigation, who was a Senator and I met and became very well acquainted with, during an interview at the El Rancho Vegas during the time that he was out here taking a look at the Basic Magnesium Plant.

But now to get to Las Vegas. I think that I said that I got to Las Vegas in 1929, and came down with Percy Nash. I left Reno in a snowstorm, and when I got to Las Vegas, the temperature was between the 80's and the 90's, and it was quite a change for a country boy from Reno. In addition, they had no air conditioning in the city of Las Vegas at all. The only air conditioning that they had was in the home of Joe May, who was a police officer, and he lived on the Westside. He had to work nights and sleep in the daytime. And as the temperatures got up around 120 [degrees] in the daytime in summer, he had to arrange to cool his house off. So he got the idea of hanging a blanket over his bedroom window, and placing a fan behind the blanket, and keeping the blanket soaked with water, and thus blowing the cool air in through the blanket into the bedroom. That was the first basis of the evaporative cooler, now known as the swamp cooler, which is in use all over the southwestern part of the country. If Joe'd only had the brains, or I could have advised him at the time, we'd've gone into the cooler business and made a million dollars. But then, those were the things that pass you by.

And at the *Review-Journal*, as I have said, the roof was flat, no circulation in the building. And with the two linotype machines heating up lead into a molten state, the heat in the composing room of the *Review-Journal* was—along about two o'clock in the afternoon in midsummer—was around 140 [degrees]. And in the front office where I was working, at least 120 [degrees]. The first air conditioning unit that we had in the *Review-Journal* was when I talked the boss into cutting a hole in the ceiling and put a cupola on the top of the roof so that the hot air could escape up through the vent. It was stirred up by the wooden fan that turned about four revolutions a minute. It did cool it down, maybe, to 130

[degrees]. I can remember any number of days going home from the *Review-Journal* office in the summertime and getting into the bathtub, filling it with cold water and reading newspapers and magazines until the sun went down, when it'd get a little cooler.

Most of the women of the community went to the southern California beaches. They'd leave as soon as school was out the last part of May and come back the first of September. So in the summertime here, it was practically a male population-operated community. Only those that couldn't make the trip to California would stay.

And in that era, of course, it was during Prohibition, as I have said, Las Vegas had its share of bootlegging establishments. Probably the most famous was the Golden Camel, which was located on the alley between Fremont Street and Ogden Street on First Street. It was operated by Fred Rump, who came here from Colorado. This was the gathering place for the entire community on a Saturday night. The Golden Camel used to, every Saturday night, provide the woman with orchids, which was the forerunner of the various giveaways which the gambling casinos and hotels went in for in a later date.

There also was the Nevada Club, which was run by Sammy and Dave Stearns, across the street and a little north of the Golden Camel. And across the street again from the Nevada Club was the Tivoli Bar and the La Salle Club. There was a place on Fremont Street, between Main and First Street, that was known as the Barrel House. This was owned by Art Schriver and Wes Westmoreland. Then Joe Morgan had his Silver Club on First Street, right off of Fremont Street.

When I first came here, I'll give you a little picture of Las Vegas. From Main Street to Fourth Street was the business district of the community, and from Fourth to Fifth Street

was where all of the so-called palatial homes of the local residents were located—where Ronzone's stands now and both ways, east and west. On Fourth street—Fourth and Fremont—was the stone house of the Ferrons. Bill Ferron was the pioneer druggist in the community. The house next to him was the Bracken house; Walter Bracken was the first postmaster and head of the Las Vegas Land and Water Company here for many years, as part of the Union Pacific Railroad. And next to that was the McNamee home—Leo A. McNamee home. Leo was an attorney for the Union Pacific Railroad here, and his family still resides in Las Vegas. On the corner was a house that belonged to Albert Duffill, who was an assemblyman from Las Vegas. During his first term at Carson City, Duffill, who was quite wealthy, shipped a carload of whiskey to Carson City and had it stored in Carson City for the benefit of the legislators and the lobbyists and any other assorted people who might come around to the legislative session. He probably was the best liked assemblyman that Clark County ever had in the legislature in Carson City. He was available any time, anywhere, and supplied his own liquor. On the south side of Fremont Street, at the corner of Fourth on the southeast corner was the Sina Norris house. Next to that was the C. P. Squires home, and next to that was the *Las Vegas Age* newspaper building. C. P. "Pop" Squires was the editor of the *Age*, and one of the real old timers of Las Vegas. Then the Nick Williams house, and at the corner of Fifth and Fremont was the Harley A. Harmon home. It later was turned into a mortuary.

Of course, we were trying to run a newspaper. As I said, I was the first and only reporter or newsman in the *Review-Journal*, and it was my job to cover the city hall and the police station, and the courthouse, and write a sports column and make up the newspaper.

I was a lot younger then than I am now and could make all those stops.

We used to have quite a time with the police department and the sheriff's office. Getting into the police department, I was over there so much that when the municipal judge, Frank McNamee, took his vacation, they made me municipal judge for the two weeks that McNamee was gone. So they decided at the time that they were going to make a cleanup of all the bums that were around the community here. The two police officers who were on the force at that time, Mark Condo and A. R. "Two Gun" Smith, raided all the tramp camps around here. The main one was over in the Union Pacific property area, over where the switchyards now are, and over by the—where the *Sun* building is on Highland. I have spent, oh, three or four hours just getting one vagrant after another in front of me, and being a court of summary justice, where justice was dispatched with speed if not right. I suppose that under the present situation the United States Supreme Court would say that we were not operating the court as it should be operated. But, nonetheless, it was effective. The defendants would come up and plead guilty, and I'd give 'em four hours to get out of town. And after two weeks, we didn't have very many left around the community, panhandling, stuff of that sort.

Again, getting back to the newspaper business, the first employee of the news department, outside of myself, was Florence Lee Jones, who was a graduate of the University of Missouri. her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. B. M. Jones, came here in 1931 and had a service station and tourist court out at Whitney. Mrs. Jones became very friendly with Mrs. Garside, whose husband, Frank Garside, was my brother's partner in the *Review-Journal*. In fact, Garside bought the newspaper in 1926 when my brother came

down from Elko and became associated as a partner with him in publication of the paper. Mrs. Garside asked Frank to put Florence to work on the newspaper as a proofreader. She started in 1933 as a proofreader and later became a general reporter, feature writer, and women's editor, and after that, she became my wife. So it was a very fortuitous circumstance that this partnership was developed between Garside and my brother!

Well, anyway, she was assigned to cover the construction of Boulder Dam. She used to make two trips a week out to Boulder City and the dam, and was accepted out there by everybody who was in an executive capacity. She could go anywhere on the dam any time, day or night, and would be admitted to any part of the project. She wrote all of the progress stories for the *Review-Journal*, and also was the AP correspondent in Las Vegas. The *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Christian Science Monitor* hired her as a stringer. So, most of the stories that were published nationwide about the city of Las Vegas came right out of the *Review-Journal*.

At that time, the *Review-Journal* was the only daily newspaper in the city. The *Las Vegas Age*, then a weekly, published by Squires, was bought by the *Review* in, oh, I guess 1947 or somewhere around there. In the early 1920's, Jim Scrugham, who owned the *Journal* in Reno, decided to come down to Las Vegas and establish a weekly newspaper. He called it the *Journal*. That lasted about six months and was sold to the *Review*, and the *Review* became the *Review-Journal*.

All during the construction of Boulder Dam, we used the *Journal* portion of the name for the *Boulder City Journal* and published the *Boulder City* paper in the Las Vegas plant. We had Elton Garrett, who now is a real estate man of Boulder City, as our *Boulder City* correspondent, and we started the first

multiple-edition newspaper with the *Boulder City Journal*. We would change the masthead, or put on the masthead of the *Boulder City Journal* and usually lead off with the one Boulder City story that would be a banner. And when we made it up for the Las Vegas consumption, we would take that off the banner and put in whatever was local news or national news, and put on the *Review-Journal* masthead.

Looking back at the thing, I am amazed that we were able to get these newspapers out, because we had only two linotype machines down at the *Review-Journal* office. One of 'em was operated by Charles Keeler, whose wife, Dorothy, was assistant county clerk in Las Vegas. He came down here a year before I did from Reno and had worked in the composing room when I was working in the news room of the newspaper in Reno. And the other one was Smith—who came here from somewhere in the South, Texas, I think. B. N. Smith. He ran the B. N. together when he talked, so that we called him "Ben" Smith. We had a one-man composing room force, Dick Lochrie, who had worked on newspapers for Garside in Tonopah before coming to Las Vegas, who would put the paper together, and as I say, it was eight pages. Page one was, of course, Page one, and Page two was usually the national news. We put all the local news on the front page that we could, and then filled in with national news. Page three would probably be a society page with personals and stuff of that sort. Page four'd be the sport page, which I was editing in addition to all my beats and local stories. Page five and six would be the legal notices and classified pages, which didn't have to be made up new every day. We just changed the classified ads, inserting some and removing some. And Page seven and eight would probably be most anything we could come up with—seven probably

would be the comic page. Page eight would be whatever we had to fill it with. It was usually legal notices, county bills, voter lists, local ads and such.

We got the thing out every day, and how we did it, I don't know, because that's a real tough job. It was a lot of fun, and it was a lot of work. But as we went along, I think we can take pride in the development of the community. Everybody that was associated with the *Review-Journal* was interested in making Las Vegas grow.

As I have said before, we assimilated the *Las Vegas Journal* of Jim Scrugham and the *Las Vegas Age* of C. P. Squires, and put out the newspaper under the hyphenated name of *Las Vegas Review-Journal*.

After Florence Lee Jones was hired, one of the first news reporters that came into the area was Clarence Heckethorne, who was a high school student here, and after graduation, worked for part-time in our newspaper office. He later became the head of the Nevada Industrial Commission in Carson City under Governor Grant Sawyer.

Another one of the news room employees was Dennis Schieck, who at the time was working for the Western Union, delivering telegrams. During his delivery periods, Schieck had a box camera which he used on many occasions to get breaking news stories and he brought the pictures in to us for use if we desired them. He was such a good photographer that, as soon as we were able to get engraving facilities in the *Review-Journal*, he was hired as a full-time photographer, and is on the *Review-Journal* at the present time in the capacity of composing room manager—or manager of production, I guess it is called.

I'll just give some background of what it used to be like to put out a newspaper in the city of Las Vegas. When I first came down here, remember that there was no long-

distance telephone service in the city of Las Vegas. The Western Union telegrams were handled out of the Union Pacific telegraph office. After they got through with their railroad business, they'd take care of the Western Union telegrams, and some days, it would get out until—if you put a telegram in at eight o'clock in the morning, it might get out at noon, and it might get out at four o'clock in the afternoon. And that was the kind of service that they had.

As anybody knows, you have to get your national news from some place. So we had what they called a United Press "pony," which was about a 200-word telegram that was sent from Los Angeles usually at seven o'clock in the morning, and this did get real good service because we were very friendly with the telegrapher—Bill Mundy, who was the Union Pacific telegrapher—and he cleared it pretty well for us. There was one sent from Los Angeles at seven o'clock in the morning, and it was at the railroad office for me to pick up when I came down to work about 7:15-7:30. And it usually contained sports news.

So I would go down and make up stories—the sports stories—and this is why I probably became able to make sports characters live for the local people. Because I had to do a lot of reading and become well acquainted with the sports figures I would have to write about. From a story of about twenty-five words, I would have to build a story of maybe three or four inches, which would be two hundred and fifty words. I always had been an avid sports fan, knew the majority of the things that were going on in all phases of sports, so it was fairly easy for me to do; and the same went for national figures.

We would get another "pony" from the United Press about eleven o'clock in the morning, which would take in national and regional news, and from that, I would have

to write the stories. Usually, we'd have to get a banner out of it, if there wasn't something local. We'd try every time we could to get a banner of local stories, or if we couldn't, we'd build it up from the "pony."

One thing that has always amazed my wife is the fact that when Huey Long was shot in Louisiana, they held his funeral down there, and we got, oh, about a hundred words on the funeral. I had to expand the thing, because a hundred words means about two paragraphs. I had to expand the thing, so I put myself in the place of the pastor who was giving the eulogy for Huey Long, and I invented the eulogy from two or three words that had been in the United Press pony. My wife read the story that I had written, and then, the following day, she read the story that was written in the *Los Angeles Times* by the staff correspondent who was there. The similarity between the two would have indicated that I was at the funeral! Well, it was—as I say—you have to be inventive in the newspaper business. There were only certain things that anybody could say about Huey Long, and having known his history, I just indicated that this was what the pastor had said, and it turned out right. Sometimes those gambles don't turn out as well as that. But it was interesting, because it kept me on my toes and made me well aware of what was going on in the other parts of the United States.

Following the "pony" situation—that lasted for about two or three years—finally they got airplane service in here, and I arranged for the United Press to fly the—what we call the—overnight file off the teletype printers which were installed in Los Angeles and were not in this area because they didn't have any telegraph lines in to take care of them. But that would beat—the overnight file would be sent up by airplane and get into Las Vegas, oh, at eight or nine o'clock,

and we would have it available for service in the afternoon. And then that would be augmented by the telegraph pony and later developments. So this made it very easy. As the paper was expanded from eight to ten to twelve to sixteen pages, we needed this stuff, and it turned out to be very satisfactory. And we used that until—well, in fact, until we put in the teletypes in Las Vegas. And when the teletypes came, of course, that was—we had become metropolitan, and it was very easy to get out a newspaper.

And, of course, we had expanded our staff. I was no longer the one-man editorial staff. As the thing—as the newspaper—grew and my responsibilities as editor took other forms, I got away from the desk and the teletype machines.

I can recall also, speaking of teletype machines, during World War II on the invasion of France. We had a blackout here in Las Vegas. Of course, we had a little room that was off from the main composing room where the teletypes were, and I can remember it was late at night when I came down to the teletype room. We had a little blue light that shown directly on the teletype machines so that it would meet the blackout requirements. And I can remember sitting there; the first flash that came on the invasion of France didn't come from the United States headquarters. It came from German headquarters. I called my brother and asked him if we could put out an extra because they were invading the area, and he said, "Whered you get it?"

And I said, "It came out of Germany."

And he said, "No, we'd better wait until we get it from the United States forces."

Well, about two hours or three hours later, it was confirmed that the invasion was on, and I always have regretted that we didn't beat everybody else out by two or three hours with an extra because we could've taken it from the

flash from Germany that—this was it. But we didn't get it out, so—.

And, as I say, after the war, I drifted away from the news desk and took over the duties of managing editor which were more or less of supervision of the news staff and hiring new people and firing old people—oh, I didn't fire very many. I'm very proud of the fact that, except during the war when help was so scarce and people were coming and going and we had to get new people to take the old peoples' places who went into the service, that when I left the *Review-Journal*, I left people in the service who had been there anywhere from five years to fifteen years. Some of the people who went into the armed services came back, and the people that I had recruited myself during the war were still there. And I think that—at least it proved to me that—they liked working for the *Review-Journal* and the guy that was the managing editor.

I'm very proud of some of the people that I broke in in the newspaper business—people like Joe McClain, who now is working for the *Sun*; Cohn McKinley, who has worked many years for the *Review-Journal*; Jim Leavy, who later became managing editor of the *Review-Journal*; John Romero, whom I brought down just after he was graduated from San Jose State College and made him sports editor of the *Review-Journal*—now he is one of the vice presidents of the Del Webb Corporation in charge of public relations; Clarence Heckethorne. Oh, there are numerous guys that I broke in to the newspaper business. Some of 'em are still in the newspaper business, some of 'em are out and have very fine jobs.

But it was an experience that I enjoyed. I looked upon the *Review-Journal* as my baby, because when I first came down here, they had no—it was just a newspaper and nobody had any direction or anything. Whatever

the *Review-Journal* was up until 1961, I made. Because it was—more or less—my brother was the business manager and paid very little attention to the daily publication of the newspaper, I mean the news end of the newspaper. Oh, he did write a column, and kept his hand in the operation of the newspaper. It was, as I say, I who guided the paper all the way through every day.

I think at might be well at this time to talk a little about election returns. When I came down to Las Vegas, of course, there were no telegraphs and no long-distance telephones. And during the elections previous to 1929, the Clark County returns were the very last to get into the central area in Reno where the votes were being counted to determine who was elected. And this was just a physical thing because you just had to wait.

There was nobody that was too interested in elections—if they could find out today, they could find out a week from now, so, what difference did it make? They were all in the ballot box and they couldn't change at, so they wouldn't worry about it too much. Of course, in the northern part of the state, they worried about it because sometimes the races were so close that Clark and Lincoln counties could change the entire result.

So when my brother came down in 1926, he decided that this thing would have to be changed. He was cognizant of how important it was to get the votes to a central counting area. So he set up a framework for collecting the votes. And through the Union Pacific Railroad and their cooperation with the telegraph, we could, or he could telegraph Sloan, and the areas along the Union Pacific Railroad, and then have somebody at Nelson and Eldorado Canyon deposit their vote totals at some place where they could be picked up by a runner and taken to the closest telegram station.

Of course, that was before Henderson, before Boulder City, and before North Las Vegas. The areas that were voting at that time were Las Vegas, Sloan, Goodsprings, Eldorado Canyon, Searchlight, Nelson, Jean—those areas were completely isolated. You could get Sloan, Jean, and probably Goodsprings through the Union Pacific Railroad telegraph system, and it was much faster than it had been before.

When I came down in 1929, the deal had been expanded so that we would dispatch people in automobiles to these various areas. One runner would pick up Goodsprings, Jean, and Sloan. Another one would go over into the Eldorado Canyon and pick up Nelson and Eldorado Canyon and that area and bring them into the newspaper. Of course, you must remember, too, that the roads in those days were all dirt roads and the automobiles were not as good as they are now, and anybody who went over to Sloan or over to Nelson, Eldorado Canyon faced the four-hour ride back to Las Vegas, because there wasn't a paved road all the way. I mean, you go out there now, you can go out through the Boulder City highway and cut off and go up into Nelson and that area over paved roads; it'd probably take you an hour—at the most, an hour and a half. And then, it was a four- or five-hour ride. And as the polls didn't close until six o'clock at night, that meant that by the time the fellow got into the office, it was ten, eleven o'clock, providing he didn't have any flat tires or anything of that sort. But we got to a situation where we could usually send in our totals by midnight at the latest. And as far as the Las Vegas returns were concerned, we would be able to get them up fairly well, by, oh, midnight.

But as the community grew and they were using, of course, hand-stamped ballots and hand-counted ballots. Sometimes, if they got

a big registration or a big vote, it would take until four or five o'clock in the morning before they even got through. This has been pretty well eliminated now by the voting machines as far as Las Vegas proper is concerned—Las Vegas and North Las Vegas. I think they're still using paper ballots in Boulder City and Henderson and in the smaller communities. But the area in Las Vegas and North Las Vegas are all handled by voting machines which give you the totals right after the votes have been cast.

It was quite a triumph when we could get the vote from the Las Vegas area into Reno in time that they could predict the winner by at least one o'clock in the morning. And that's still being done now.

Speaking now of movie stars, it was quite interesting when I was working for the *Review-Journal*. I was also correspondent for the United Press, and I would get calls from the United Press that, so-and-so was coming up here from Los Angeles to get married, and cover the story. As a result, I was probably best man for more movie stars than any one man in the United States. They would come up to get married, and I would go over to the courthouse to get the story, and would be brought into the picture as one of the witnesses in the marriage ceremonies that were performed either by the justice of the peace or by the then district judge.

Some of the people whose weddings I have witnessed are Herbert Marshall, Andy Devine, Fred MacMurray, Bob Burns—the “bazooka King” that was with Bing Crosby in “Sweet Lelani.” And I’ll have to tell you a story about Burns when he came here to get married. Wherever Burns and Crosby appeared at any function at all, or when they would walk into a nightclub in Los Angeles, whenever they were spotted, the orchestra would play “Sweet Lelani.” It was the song

that was featured in the movie, “Sweet Lelani.” It was a very beautiful tune. I was a witness for Burns’s wedding, which, incidentally, was held in North Las Vegas, which was just blossoming at that time as a community. And after the ceremony, which occurred about three o'clock in the afternoon, we decided that we would go out to the Yucca Club to have dinner before Burns and his new bride went back to Los Angeles. We went out to the Yucca Club in my car and stopped in front of the door. And as we were walking in the door, Burns and his bride were walking in. And unbeknownst to anybody—nobody in the city of Las Vegas knew that (except me) Burns was in town. And unbeknownst to Burns, on the other side was the guy that was working the jukebox. Just as Burns and his bride walked into the door, the fellow inside had put a nickel into the nickelodeon, pushed a button, and out came “Sweet Lelani”! And Burns thought the thing had been staged or something, until I told him it was just a coincidence.

Another time, about this time, we had some contact with the Paramount Studios in Los Angeles. The Paramount Studio was preparing to release the movie, “The Lady Eve,” and they wanted some kind of a gimmick to promote the thing. So Bob Griffith and I went down to Los Angeles to Paramount Studios and sat down at the publicity department for several hours, and finally came up with the idea that they ought to discover a nude gal running around the desert, outside Las Vegas. And when we captured the girl, she would be taken to Los Angeles, given a movie test, and given a role in some movie, and she would be “the Lady Eve.” It worked out much better than anybody ever expected. I came back to Las Vegas. And as I say, I was the correspondent for United Press, and somebody else in the office was the

correspondent for the Associated Press, so we cooked up the deal and sent out a story over both the wire services that somebody that had been out in Paradise Valley and seen a nude woman running around out there. It didn't cause much sensation until the second story we put out that this woman had come out and accosted somebody in an automobile that was out there. And it was getting a little hairy at the time. And we started in getting phone calls and telegraph messages from as far away as England wanting to know if we could get an interview with the nude girl at Paradise Valley. And it went on for about four or five days, and it was about time for the girl to be discovered and taken back to Hollywood. I got ahold of the public relations man who was on this particular story in Los Angeles, and he said, "Johnny, I'm sorry, we can't get the gal because our attorneys figure that if we do, we'll be violating the white slave law. And we can't come up and get her."

So here I was with the stories coming out of Las Vegas and no ending to the thing. I didn't know how the dickens the story was going to end. However, Fate came into the picture when the sheriff got a letter that was turned over to him by a prominent local attorney. And the letter read, "Dear So and So: They have discovered our sunbathing site. See what you can do." It seems that this attorney and his client had been sunbathing out on the sand dune out in the Paradise Valley, and it was not to *our* knowledge that they were there. And as a result, I sent out a final story that we had discovered who the nude woman of Paradise Valley was—that she was a divorcee who was sunbathing out on the sand dune. So the story turned out all right, but I never went through another publicity hoax like that one!

You have heard about the water situation, and that there was a controversy over the hotels and how much water they could use

and whether they could reprocess their own effluents, and so forth. Did I get involved in that? Well, not at all, except just generally. That was during the time that Las Vegas was on water rationing, and everybody was squawking about the fact that the hotels were getting water for golf courses, when the residents couldn't get water for their homes. This was more or less of a feud that developed between Hank Greenspun of the *Las Vegas Sun* and the owner of the Paradise Valley Country Club, and some of the hotels.

Greenspun was trying to get water for his Paradise Valley Country Club, and the Las Vegas Valley Water District wasn't about to lay the lines out there for his country club, and he couldn't get any well permit, so he started in raging on the hotels to force the Las Vegas Valley Water District to give him water for his golf course. And nobody in the city of Las Vegas was too concerned about the thing.

It's a sad commentary—and I say this with all charity—that a man with the writing ability and the things that Hank Greenspun has had does such a poor job of community relations. Greenspun came to the city of Las Vegas, oh, it was in '45, '46, sometime around there. He came in here out of New York City, and had a little less than nothing. He started as a public relations man for Milton Prell of the Club Bingo, and then launched into a magazine, much like the *Hollywood Reporter* in Los Angeles, where some rather peculiar ideas were used to get advertising into the magazine. And he was floating around Las Vegas as a public relations man.

There was a strike of the linotype operators in the *Review-Journal*, and picket lines were set up around the *Review-Journal* for, oh, I think that the *Review-Journal* still is "unfair to organized labor"—I'm not sure that they have ever settled their labor dispute. But anyway, the typographical union set up a

new newspaper here, called the *Las Vegas Sun* to fight the *Review-Journal*. And all of the operators from the *Review-Journal* went to work for the *Sun*, and we had—in the *Review-Journal*—we had strike breakers come in there and operate the paper.

Shortly after that happened, Greenspun bought control of the newspaper from the typographical union and started the newspaper himself. This was about the time that Don Reynolds bought into the *Review-Journal*. He bought out Mr. F. F. Garside, who was my brother's partner, and immediately, Mr. Reynolds decided he would put in teletype machines, which are automatic typesetting machines, in violation of the union contract. So that's when the strike was held, and they started the *Las Vegas Sun*. As I say, Greenspun bought control from the typographical union and has been running the newspaper ever since.

As a result of his purchase of the newspaper, he started on a role of crusader who was going to slay the big dragon and the sheet down the street, namely the *Review-Journal*, and started to do most anything he could to discredit the *Review-Journal*. My brother and myself, having been in the city of Las Vegas for many, many years, knew the trend of the community and tried to be progressive along with the community.

While the *Review-Journal* was the only newspaper in the city of Las Vegas and controlled, certainly, the news emanating from Las Vegas, we could, more or less, control the news that went out of the city. But whether this was good or whether it was bad, I don't know. But it certainly redounded to the benefit of the city of Las Vegas. Any of the bad stuff that was merely for local consumption, we never sent out over the wires. When we were working for datelines in Las Vegas in the early days of the community before Boulder

Dam. It was this sort of cooperation between the community and the newspaper that built this community. And I am sure that my brother and I both had a great deal to do with the growth of Las Vegas through this idea of controlled news going out of the community.

But I'll tell you one incident that I know could've broken completely out in the open as far as race relations were concerned. It happened during World War II out at Nellis Air Force Base. The Negroes on the Westside were—the male Negroes over there were—mad because the mate Negroes from the air base would come in and steal their girls. And they were getting real restless, and there were things that could've happened had any match been struck. The *Review-Journal* never mentioned at all any idea of a march on the city of Las Vegas—which was planned. They wanted publicity for the thing and got none. And as a result, nothing developed.

Now, this has been demonstrated on many occasions to me, and that's why these—the way the newspapers and the television cameras are handling these race troubles just sickens me. Because the majority of the people that are in these race riots are in there for one purpose alone, and that's to get their faces on television or get their names in the paper. And the first thing that happens when they have a riot, you get these television people sticking a microphone under some Negro's face and asking him what his name is, and what he's doing, and so forth and so on, and giving him nationwide exposure. As I say, I would say that ninety percent of the people that are demonstrating in these marches and so forth are publicity seekers. But ninety percent of 'em are real devoted people and wouldn't riot or wouldn't burn down buildings or loot buildings if they had the opportunity. It's the ten percent that are irresponsible.

I don't only criticize the Negroes, don't misunderstand me. It's the same way with the hippies. I mean, there's no—in my estimation, there's no—reason for the hippies or the Negro hippies, or whatever you have, because the majority of them, as I say, are publicity seekers. And certainly if they know that they're getting their faces on the cameras of the television, they're going to do whatever is necessary. I think that you can—anybody can—see that any athletic event, say, or horse race, or anything, that the young kids in the background of the guy that is being interviewed are always waving at the camera. And when somebody hits a foul ball out into the outfield, everybody's running up and waving their hands or making faces or something of that sort, and it's just a publicity seeking outfit. You pull the publicity away from these guys, and they're got going anywhere. I am firmly convinced that a heavy, heavy burden falls upon the news media of the nation today for responsibility for much of the rioting and looting and stuff of that sort is due to the news media of the United States.

And I got on this, this I say, because we've gone through the thing down here, with the so-called feud that developed between the *Review-Journal* and the *Sun*, I hold no animosity for Hank Greenspun, believe me.: think the guy has accomplished a great deal during the time that he has been in the city of Las Vegas. But he could've accomplished so much more if he had not been eaten up by the feud that he started with the *Review-Journal*.

And don't misunderstand me, I worked for Hank Greenspun for about three or four months, putting out a special edition for the *Las Vegas Sun* after I quit the *Review-Journal*. I found him to be a very able boss, knew what he was doing, knew how to run a newspaper, and as I say, I think he had done a tremendous lot more good had he not had so

much bitterness in his heart for the *Review-Journal*. It was an economic matter, entirely, because he was fighting for his life in the *Sun*. The *Review-Journal* had a big lead, and the only thing that he succeeded in doing—not he, but his newspaper, succeeded in doing—is to put doubt in people's minds as to what you could believe by reading it in the newspaper.

And since we have left—since my brother and I have left—the *Review-Journal*, I would say very frankly that the city of Las Vegas—the citizens of the city of Las Vegas—have no editorial voice. Because Don Reynolds is five times worse than Hank Greenspun. He has, no other thing is his god but money. Here, again, I don't say this critically of Reynolds. But I'm stating facts. I tried to work for Reynolds after my brother left, and I just found it impossible. And I think that, as far as I am concerned, I worked for a lot of people, and a lot of bastards. But I just couldn't work for Reynolds any more. The way he runs his newspapers, he is out of town, it's a foreign operation, he'd go down to the *Review-Journal*—it's the same way at the *Sun*, I guess—I'm not as familiar with the *Sun* as I am with the *Review-Journal*—but you'd go into either one of the newspapers today and see one set of people that are working there, and go in a month from now and see an entirely different set of people working there. And having been in the newspaper business, this isn't—this doesn't do any good for the continuity, and it doesn't do any good for the community because the people don't stay long enough to know the community problem—the community leaders and what they're trying to do to solve them. And as a result, you've got something that—it's just impossible. I say this from a long experience in the newspaper business.

I started in the newspaper business in 1927. While I have only worked in Reno

and Las Vegas, I have been in contact with people all over the United States in the press associations, Frank H. Bartholomew of the United Press—the President of the United Press; Jack Bell, of the Associated Press; Bob Considine, International News Service; oh, Ron Wagoner, United Press in Los Angeles, and numerous, widely known people that are leaders in the newspaper field, and have had long talks with them many times, and I think that I have a pretty good idea of what a good newspaperman is. And, certainly, I don't think that you have very many in the city of Las Vegas at the present time. And I'll probably get crucified for saying that, but that's the way I feel personally.

The *Review-Journal* and the *Sun* survived the big feud, and now are going forward in a good financial position. The newspapers are filled with ads, and the *Review-Journal* fills the rest of the stuff up with columnists that they pay \$2.50 a week for, rather than have local people working as reporters at \$85 or \$90 or \$100 a week. It's an operation that just isn't good for the city of Las Vegas. I don't know what the future will be. I understand that Howard Hughes tried to buy both the *Review-Journal* and the morning *Sun*. But when Hughes bought the television station that was owned by Hank Greenspun, he paid \$3,600,000 for it and gave Greenspun as much money as he'll ever need, and no reason why he should sell the *Sun*. Reynolds has so much money that he doesn't know what to do with it, and when he was offered \$4,000,000 for the *Review-Journal*, he asked Mr. Hughes' representative, "That'll I do with the \$4,000,000? I got all the money I need from now on, and I would only have to pay Uncle Sam." So there's no possibility now that the newspapers will be sold. What'll happen if either one of them—either Reynolds or Greenspun—dies, I don't know. Perhaps it

might be well if they moved to some other country and let somebody take over the newspapers that knew what they were doing. Maybe I shouldn't have said that, but that's the way I feel, anyway.

Along with other people, I probably met many, many famous people. People like Herbert Marshall, the movie star; Andy Devine; Bob Hope; Jack Benny; Paul Lucas, the Austrian actor who was an Academy Award winner; Ava Gardner; Fred MacMurray; Bob Burns—I told you about Bob Burns. One of the most interesting characters that I met and who has been in the local news very greatly in the past is Howard Hughes.

It was during World War II that Howard first came to Las Vegas. He came here from Los Angeles and stayed at El Rancho Vegas, and he was quite a familiar figure around El Rancho, and he was not at all reticent about meeting people. He would come down into the breakfast room, dressed in dirty khaki pants, and then he had on tennis shoes, and looked like anything but the millionaire he was. However, he was very easy to approach, and I had several conversations with him at that time and found him a very very fine chap.

He had several airplanes that he was testing out. One of them he was testing out here in Las Vegas. That was one of the reasons that he was here. And one afternoon, I was out with the public relations man of TWA, of which at that time Howard Hughes was president, when I got a telephone call from the *Review-Journal*, saying that Hughes' airplane had gone into Lake Mead, and that Ava Gardner was aboard, and United Press in Los Angeles wanted a story on it. So I went back into the bar where the TWA public relations man was and told him the story, and he said, "Oh, my God, let's go."

So we went out to Boulder City, and there we met Johnny Myers, who was the overall

public relations man for Hughes' operation and TWA. And we told him what we had heard, and he said, "No, Ava Gardner was not on the plane. However, the plane did go into the lake, and they rescued the pilot."

So I went to the closest phone and called and told the newspapers that Ava Gardner was not on board, and that I would give them the full details of the story later. So we went in to see the pilot, who was not badly injured, despite the fact that the plane sank in the water. And they rescued him and pulled him out. I got a story as to what happened and sent that out over the wire. I don't know whether Hughes is cognizant of the fact that we knew the story on Ava Gardner or not. But she was not in the plane, and she was not supposed to be in the city of Las Vegas, which we knew was not true. But at any rate, that's neither here nor there.

The next day or two—or the next two or three days—they brought divers up here to go down into the lake for the plane because there was a lot of secret instrumentation in the airplane, and they wanted to get that, if they couldn't get anything else, so they pulled the plane out of the lake and took it down to Los Angeles. And Hughes was around the city of Las Vegas occasionally for, oh, maybe a year or two.

He came back here later, after the Flamingo Hotel was built and had—it was just after he had purchased all the property up in the Red Rock area. And he came back here, and apparently, at that time, was going to do something with the land that he purchased. He went out to the Flamingo and hired the penthouse out there and was living in the penthouse when some general from Washington, who was a very good friend of Benny Siegel's, came to town. The hotel people told Hughes he'd have to move out of the penthouse. And he said, "This is fine," and he left Las Vegas and never

came back until about 1966, when he did come back to stay. His activities now are in the newspapers every once in a while, but at that time, we were sure that Hughes was going to do something in the city of Las Vegas. But—he just got mad and left. We hope the same thing doesn't happen again.

Another thing that I had a lot of fun with was when I attended the legislative sessions, I first went up to the legislature as a reporter for the *Review-Journal* in 1954. And from 1954 until 1962, I covered eight sessions of the legislature. I think there were six regular sessions and two special sessions.

Attending a legislative session after you get the swing of it—after the first legislative session—is much like attending college again. You're living in a separate world in the legislature, just the same as when you're going to college, and if you're in the fraternity of the legislators, you've got it made.

It's interesting to see the processes of legislation and to learn how little most of the citizens know about legislative action. I have seen in the legislature the state of Nevada from 1954 until 1962 grow double—triple, I guess. I can recall when the slogan of the state of Nevada used to be "One square man for one square mile," because we had a hundred thousand population and a hundred thousand square miles. Now we've got that many people, or better than that, in the city of Las Vegas alone. And the whole tenor of the legislative processes has changed. Naturally, it's changed because of the reapportionment.

People will tell you that they don't have the same kind of leadership that they used to have in years gone by, citing people like, oh, Doug Tandy, Getchell, Ken Johnson, and the big people of the past who ruled the legislature. Well, I'll put guys like Fred Settelmeyer, Floyd Lamb, John Fransway, Melvin B. "Bode" Howard, the last two from Winnemucca,

Carl Dodge, some of the boys that served in the legislature from Washoe County—I'll put them up against the old-time legislators.

However, there have been, and I think will be, increasing action on the part of a lot of the people that are in the legislature now to legislate for areas and classes rather than the state as a whole. The people that I mentioned as the old-time leaders believed in the state as a whole, and believed that legislation should be made for the citizens of the state rather than for any class or any area.

There always has been the thought that the north and the south were divided. This probably is true when you get into the political field, I mean, the elections and state central committee things. But in the legislature, this pretty well smoothes itself out. The legislatures that I attended have brought about real fine cooperation between the north and the south, and the east and west, and the east and the south, and all over. You get into a committee meeting, into the—say, the finance committee which is passing on bills that need finances—they don't take a look at whether it's in northern Nevada or southern Nevada, the thing that they take a look at, is it needed? If it is needed, have we got the money that can be appropriated to take care of it? And you would be surprised, I think, if you could go to the legislature and see how industrious these various committees are. It's not something that is just passed over lightly, that they're passing bills just because the bills are introduced. But statesmanship is pretty well-developed in the legislature—in the past legislatures I have noticed in the legislature since it has been reapportioned that we are not getting the same kind of action that we did prior to reapportionment. In my estimation, the small counties of the state have practically been buried by the overwhelming weight of the membership that the large counties have.

And we're going to get this; they're going to have the urban problems presented to them rather than the suburban, and this is going to—as I say, the suburban areas are going to be buried.

As a general rule, the people in the legislature, or in the Nevada state legislature, at least, from the smaller counties were conservative people that had brought about "one sound state," a slogan that came up during the Kirman administration. And nobody ever had to worry about whether you were going overboard on welfare or aid to dependent children, or stuff of that sort. While these are very good programs, if you will recall, if you listen to your TV or your radio, you find out that there are drives for money for everything from a toothache to kidney stones. They're all very, very fine projects and should be supported. But sooner or later, you're going to reach in your pocket and find out that you don't have any money if you contribute to all of them.

And this is the thing that concerns me more than anything else. Perhaps it's because I was raised by a very conservative family. Our family was not excessively wealthy, and we had to work for everything we earned and everything we got. And when you do that for thirty-five or forty years, you come to the conclusion that—well, my father always used to say, "If you don't take care of yourself, nobody's going to take care of you." I'm afraid that if my father were alive today, he would become a very violent, right-wing Republican. He was a Republican, but not a violent right-wing.

But in looking back over the legislative sessions, we're losing the thing that made this country great, in reliability of one's own self and the helping of one another. I can remember when anybody was going to raise

a barn or do something, oh, thresh wheat, or stuff of that sort, all the neighbors would come in and help 'em put the barn up or thresh the wheat. And the wheat threshers would go from one ranch to the other, and the guys that were on the ranch that first used the wheat threshers would move down themselves with all their kids and help the guy down the road. And this is something you don't get any more. You find out that people just don't want to get involved. And it's something that I just can't understand. Perhaps the "New Thought" can tell me what it's all about, but I don't think they can, because as I say, I was raised different than they are now.

But getting back to the legislature, the leaders of the legislature, of course, have been from all over the state. There's no one section that has had any monopoly on leadership. It might be interesting to know that all of the bills passed in the legislature are not passed either in committee or on the floor of either house. Whether they pass or die, on many occasions, is decided somewhere off the floor, like the Melody Lane bar, or the old Senator bar, or, across the street from the capitol, it used to be, or the Arlington Hotel, or some place like that. And it's only natural because the majority of your legislators like to have a good time, in addition to working hard. And the harder they work, the harder they play, on some occasions. And when you will get down in this area outside the capitol, you lose all of the formality that is shown in the capitol and on the floor and in the committee meetings, and relax and discuss these bills to a great extent in these sessions. Don't misunderstand, I don't say that the decision on the bills is made in an alcoholic haze. It's far from it. This is incidental. But you have a spirit of camaraderie in the legislature that evidences itself off the floor and out of the committee rooms. Perhaps it used to be in the

cloak rooms that these bills were discussed, and now it's in even more relaxing areas.

Some of the big things of the legislature, of course—the past legislatures—is the big "red carpet party" that is put on by George Vargas every session of the legislature. George is the lobbyist for many of the larger corporations in the United States. One of them is the S and H Green Stamp organization, and it used to be that, if anybody wanted to be assured of good treatment on the part of the lobbyists, it was to introduce a bill in the legislature to outlaw green stamps. And there has been much conversation that, any time anybody got broke at the legislature, all they had to do was introduce such a bill, and suddenly somewhere, they would find succor, let us say (that's s-u-c-c-o-r). Nobody ever claimed that anybody ever got paid off, but there were instances that the rumors were rife, let us say. I do not charge—don't misunderstand me—I do not charge George Vargas with that because there were others before him who were lobbyists for the S and H Green Stamps.

One of the great characters of the legislature—and there have been many—was John Mueller, who was—oh, he was, as far as I can remember, always in politics. He was one of Scrugham's very fine right-hand men and then he has been lobbyist—or he was lobbyist—for several of the local interests in Washoe County at the legislature and had also served as a "senator" in the legislature for several years—John was known during the lobbying days as "the eighteenth senator" because any bill that was introduced that was unfavorable to his clients—he knew either how to get it passed or get it killed, or have it held in committee or something of the sort, so that it never did have a chance to get through the legislature as a whole. John did have great control over the senate of the state of Nevada. Any bill that was passed by the assembly, if

they wanted it passed by the senate, they'd better see John. John had enough money of his own so that he did not have to do anything about taking money for his job. So far as I know, John never did exert any undue influence on these guys. By that, I mean putting much pressure on them. John never had to. He was the type of a guy that had, always, nine senators that were committed to vote his way, and with nine senators, he had the control of the majority. And had John not been a very devoted citizen of the state of Nevada, this could have been real dangerous. But so far as I have been able to determine, there was never a bill that was either passed or killed that wasn't something that would benefit the state of Nevada, or, if it was killed, it would have been of detriment to the state. I think John Mueller was one of the most loyal Nevadans that has ever been around the legislative halls. When John Mueller died, something went out of the legislature.

I guess, fortunately, for me, when John died, I more or less inherited his mantle. And for the last two sessions that I was up there at the legislature, I, too, I think, exerted some influence on the legislature as a whole. I attended most of the meetings of the finance committee and most of the meetings of the ways and means committee, two of the most important money committees in the legislature. And I think, as far as I am concerned, I have always tried to be a good citizen of the state of Nevada, and I think that my record that I have put on tape here, has proven that I have been.

There isn't any organization that I have joined, with the exception of the 20-30 Club and the Demolay (and this for the reason that I left Reno before it could be accomplished), there isn't any organization that I have joined but I have been the ultimate leader. In addition to being District Deputy Grand

Exalted Ruler of the Elks lodge, the highest position that anybody can get in the Elks lodge, and Exalted Ruler, vice-president of the State Elks Association, president of the Las Vegas and Nevada State Junior Chamber of Commerce, and a winner of the Pall Mall newspaper award, which was awarded for excellence in journalism, president of the Nevada State Press Association, member of the National Press Club in Washington, member of the Los Angeles Press Club. And all of this, I think, indicates that I certainly have the state of Nevada at heart and that my activities have indicated that I more or less have been a leader in my field, if I may be so bold as to say so.

And that is why, I suppose, that Johnny Mueller's mantle fell on me. I had been in the legislature—around the legislature, from 1954, and I think John died in 1963; for the last two sessions of the legislature, I was in his shoes. And certainly these people in the legislature sought my advice, and by this, I gathered that they certainly appreciated that I would give them an unbiased deal. I think the State Archives bill indicates the type of a person that I was at the legislature, because, certainly, I was not looking for anything other than to save the Archives for the people that are coming along later. And having a deep love for the state of Nevada and its history, I expected no great praise for the thing. Certainly, I did it, and I'm very proud of it and glad that it got done. But as far as any great whoop and hoorah, why, this doesn't mean anything. Your actions do more than going around waving a flag.

I might say that as far as the newspapers are concerned—the newspapers for which I worked are concerned—we certainly contributed to the advancement of the city, the country, and the state. A newspaper is kind of a peculiar—occupies kind of a peculiar

position, and especially in a small town like Las Vegas when we were growing up here with the newspaper. As I say, we had the only newspaper in the city of Las Vegas and while in later years people came in and said that a monopoly was certainly a very bad deal for the community and that the community was not allowed to grow because of the monopoly, I only say to them that a monopoly is bad if it's in the wrong hands.

We felt—my brother and I felt—and we more or less guided the policy of the *Review-Journal*—that we had an obligation to the community to do the best job we could to not only promote the community, but certainly give the people the newspaper that could be read and without any feeling that there was bias. It was my idea that we should have, for instance on the editorial page, all types of feeling on the part of the columnists. And as a result, we would get on one side Westbrook Pegler, and on the other side Drew Pearson. And if you can get any poles that are more opposite than they were when they were writing, I'll put in with you. And then we'd have the middle-of-the-line group. So we tried to present the news in a manner that people could read and make up their own minds.

We never tried to lead them except on events that were either good or bad—we felt—for the city, county, or state. And believe me, before we ever got into any crusade or anything of that sort, we had plenty of advice from people in all steps of life. Some of our confidants were people like Ed Clark, who was the big banker in Las Vegas at that time and was also Democratic National Committeeman. And Father J. J. Lambe of the Catholic church, and Charlie Sloan of the Baptist church, and Archie Grant, who is a prominent businessman here. It was our feeling that, in our obligation to the community, we should have solid reasons for

either opposing or supporting any event or any thing that was to be of benefit.

As I told you, we supported many causes. Had it not been for the *Review-Journal*, I doubt very much that the original Las Vegas Valley Water District plan would have gone through. I can tell you now that we did do a little finagling, for which we're not sorry, but it wasn't exactly honest, let us say. There was a deal in the Las Vegas Valley Water District proposal where we knew—we in the newspaper knew—that it provided for meters on the water lines. We did not at the time dwell too much on the meter situation, which probably would have been one of the things that the newspapers of today would have done, and they'd probably have defeated the bond issue. This is the thing that I just can't understand. Because certainly, had we not passed the Las Vegas Valley Water District bond issue, Las Vegas would have been a community of ten thousand people from here on out. Because in this desert area, you just can't survive without water. And having the water available, certainly it was up to the people of the community to bring water in here so the community could expand. This is only one of the things that we accomplished, during the tenure that we had in the *Review-Journal*.

My brother took the attitude of “Don’t ever sell Las Vegas short,” and it was optimistic. The newspaper’s attitude was optimistic all the way along. We didn’t—in our news columns or our editorial columns, we didn’t—pick fights with anybody. We had the broad view that what was good for the community was good for the people. So many events that have become part of the Las Vegas community, some of them were inaugurated by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*; many of them were supported. It was our feeling that the *Review-Journal* should be close to the Chamber of Commerce, and as a

result four members of the staff of the *Review-Journal* were all members of the Chamber of Commerce. I was a director of the Chamber of Commerce at one time. The *Review-Journal* was, as I say, in everything. My brother was president of the Rotary Club here. As I have already said, I was president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce and guided some of these organizations through a lot of trouble, but overall for the development of the city of Las Vegas.

Looking at the newspapers of today, the only thing that I can say—and this is not confined to the city of Las Vegas or the state of Nevada, it's everybody everywhere in the United States, every newspaper—everybody wants to be a columnist, and comment on the events of the day. If somebody gets killed, there isn't a factual story that is written. Everybody wants to be a chief and nobody wants to be an Indian. And that is the reason that I think that the newspapers are sinking rapidly in their influence on the community.

I look often at the *Los Angeles Times*. The *Los Angeles Times* is supposed to be a Republican newspaper, and when I was growing up in the newspaper business, when you were a Republican, you were a Republican. And when you were a Democrat, you were a Democrat. The *Times* did everything that they could to elect Ronald Reagan governor of the state of California, and knew what his campaign pledges were before they ever supported him. They get him into the Capitol at Sacramento, and cut out and ran—just leave 'em there, hanging. Well, this is a helluva way to run a railroad—I mean, what is a politician supposed to do when a powerful newspaper like the *Los Angeles Times* supports all of his views before he gets in, and then when he gets in, they run off and leave him. Who does he have? Isn't there any loyalty anywhere in the world any more? This is one thing that worries

me, as I—I'm on the downhill grade now. I am over the top and going down.

But looking back over this whole thing, this is the thing that disturbs me so much today. You have none of the fundamentals that our forefathers had. You have no loyalties, you have no integrity. Truth doesn't mean a thing any more. Whether this came out of Hitler's "big lie," I don't know. And there is no compassion in the world. Everybody's fighting everybody else. This isn't the way it was when I was growing up. Perhaps I grew up in a beautiful era—I don't know.

But looking back at it, you see the various steps that came along that probably pointed the way to what's going on now. I have the theory that the Prohibition law was the one thing that broke down the moral attitudes of the United States of America. It was a great dream of some poorly informed people. They were able to inflict this dream on the people of the United States, and they tried to legislate morals into the people of the country. And having seen the legislature and a lot of the congressional sessions, I am convinced that there is no possibility that you can legislate morals in the people. They're going to live the way they want to live, and the hell with the laws. And that was proved by the Prohibition law. For the first, not more than two months, the Prohibition law was a success. And then they started in breaking it. You could get alcohol from the drugstores. You could make home brew. You could get any of this stuff, and as a result, bootlegging grew to be quite a deal in the United States of America. And I can remember when I was a kid, growing up, that if any woman was seen on the streets drunk, or was seen in a bar drinking, she was definitely an outcast, or a woman from the houses of prostitution. Good women just didn't do that sort of thing. And I get quite a bang out of some of the beer

commercials now, showing the women—the 1890's quaffing beer. If any of the women would—at least, in the area that I got into when I was growing up, ever drink any beer, they wouldn't be invited to a party again. This was strictly a man's activity.

Well, as it went along, you had the—it became the thing to do to go to speakeasies and nightclubs that featured booze. Even the society girls from New York and Chicago and elsewhere thought they were a great big success when they became singers in the bootlegging joints of their communities. And as a result, your moral attitude broke down. It used to be that the high school kids would get a couple pints of liquor and take a girl out and feed her liquor, and what happened? And, as I say, the moral attitudes of the United States broke down, and one step has led to another until it seems to me in looking back at it, that we don't have the strength that the pioneers had—maybe we don't need it, but I think that the problems that the modern people are facing today are a great deal worse than the pioneers faced when they were coming across the continent, along unbroken trails. Certainly, you'd shoot an Indian and protect yourself, everybody banding together for self-preservation. But today, as I say, you get people that don't want to get *involved* in anything. Oh, isn't this what we're all here for, to help each other? I don't know.

I have delivered quite a sermon on this thing from getting into the newspaper business. But as I say, I do feel that the newspaper has a responsibility and whether they are meeting that responsibility, I don't know.



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# 3

## SOME OF MY IMPORTANT FEATURE STORIES ABOUT SOUTHERN NEVADA

### BOULDER DAM

Those days in Las Vegas were probably the most hectic that I have seen. As you will recall, the Boulder Dam bill was passed in December, 1928, and ratified by six states in 1929, and it was funded in 1930. And the construction work, or the contracts, were let in 1931. It's an interesting sidelight on the construction of Boulder Dam that Frank Crowe, who later became general superintendent for the Six Companies, who built the dam, spent about a year in this area going up and down the Colorado River to determine just how the dam could be built. As you probably know, the canyons were straight up and down and there were very, very few people who knew how this dam could be built, Crowe being one of them. It was necessary for the constructors of Boulder Dam to put up a million dollar completion bond, which during that time, the Depression, was more than any one company could make. So Frank Crowe went out and formed the Six Companies.

Let's see if I can name 'em for you: Utah Construction Company, Henry J. Kaiser and W. A. Bechtel Company, I used to be able to name 'em, but those are two of the most important members of the Six Companies. Pacific Bridge Company was another one, as was MacDonald-Kuhn Company. The other two were Morrison-Knudson Company, and the J. F. Shea Company. They were called the "Big Six," but were officially the Six Companies, Incorporated, of San Francisco. They put in a joint bid and won the contract for \$48,890,000, the largest labor contract awarded by the United States government up to that time.

During the early part of the summer of the year that the contract was let, 1931, the United States government put up an employment building here in Las Vegas; it was across the street from the present county courthouse. It was just a one-room shack which was operated by Leonard Blood, and all hiring had to come through that one building. And you would have— for many months, you would

have—lines of men a block, or a block and a half long, waiting to get in for applications for employment. And people were coming from all over the United States. It was during the Depression, of course, and everybody saw Boulder Dam as a place where they could get work. And during the construction—the early days of construction of Boulder Dam—we would have Ph.D.'s working on a muck stick, in the mines or in the tunnels down there, and people that used to be on Wall Street driving trucks. And there was a general immigration into the city of Las Vegas by all these people.

As a result, there were many shack towns that sprang up. Probably the most notorious was known as Hooverville, which is right down at the bottom of the hill that leads into North Las Vegas. In fact, it was just below the cemetery, and it had a population of maybe, oh, a thousand people. And the shacks were built out of most anything—tin cans, cardboard boxes, piano boxes, anything that they could find to live in. And then there were two communities out on the road to Boulder Dam. One of 'em was Oklahoma City, and the other was Pitcher, named after the communities in the southwest from whence came the people that populated the two towns. One was on one side of the road, and the other one was on the other side of the road, near Railroad Pass. And this was the focal point of most of the disturbances that we had and most of the murders that occurred during the early days of Boulder Dam.

At one time, Harley A. Harmon, who was the district attorney of Clark County, had five murder charges going on at the district court, one right after the other. They convicted and sentenced to death all five of 'em, and as a result, they didn't have much more trouble with murders in the community.

Of course, you must understand that the sheriff's office was responsible for that area

out there, and the sheriff had three deputies. One of 'em was Tony Marteletti, and the sheriff was Joe Keate—Sheriff Keate—and Tony Marteletti and Ray Griffith, and Frank Waite were deputies. And they ran a pretty tight ship, combined with the assistance that was given by the security force at Boulder Dam. They had a security force out there. Originally, the government sent in U. S. marshals into the area, and, the first marshal in here was a fellow by the name of Claude Williams. And the first shanty town out around Boulder Dam was named Williamsville after him.

There are a thousand and six stories that have been told about the construction of Boulder Dam, some of them true, and most of them false. It is a fact that there were a great many heat deaths in the canyon during the first summer down there. That was for two reasons. One was because of the heat, and the second was that the people working in the canyons had been on one or less meals per day for quite some time. And when they got down there and saw the Anderson Commissary there, :4th all this food stacked up to eat, they just couldn't believe it. They just gorged themselves and then went down in the canyon, and the heat'd hit 'em, and they'd keel over. The government, at that time, when all the deaths were occurring, asked Harvard University to send out some scientists to see what could be done to combat the heat. And they came up with the salt tablets to help prevent dehydration. And every employee at the dam working in the canyon and those that weren't, too, I guess, were required to have salt tablets in their possession at all times, and to take about one an hour. And it was determined that this did a great deal towards combating the heat prostration, although, once the people got used to eating regularly and not quite as much as they did when they first came there, it was all right.

I can remember Boulder City and the Boulder Darn area when, well, on the river, the Colorado River, up above the darn, about where, oh, I would say where the marina is now, in that area—it was what they called the “big bend.” And it was a sandy bend in the river where the river wound around and then went down into Black Canyon where Boulder Dam was built. And many times, we'd go down there for a picnic. It was rather treacherous because, while it might not have been quicksand, the sand on the beach there at the big bend was so undermined by water that you could sink right down in. So everybody stayed away from the beach on the big bend. I was out there once with Frank Crowe and Walker Young. Walker Young was the project engineer for the Bureau of Reclamation. But they were laying out Boulder City.

There is quite a story regarding why Boulder City was set where it was. At the time, Ray Lyman Wilbur was Secretary of the Interior and in charge of the Bureau of Reclamation, which was building the dam. And Wilbur came out to see what was going on in this area. Las Vegas was being considered as the railhead for the dam supplies. Wilbur came out here, and being a President of Stanford University some years before, he was supposed to be quite blue-nosed. The people of Las Vegas, wanting the city to become the railhead, because of the business that would attend the settlement of the community, were very interested in seeing that Wilbur didn't see any of the vices that were so rampant in the city of Las Vegas at the time.

On the day scheduled for Wilbur's arrival in a private car, the word went out from the police department that all of the houses of prostitution on North First Street would be closed, and there would be no liquor sold in the community until Wilbur got out of the city. So he was taken on a trip through the

city of Las Vegas and out to the dam site. And during the time that he was on the trip, Paul Shoup, who was the son of the president of the Southern Pacific Railroad, upon whose special car Wilbur was traveling, and several newspapermen who were with the Secretary, wanted to know if there wasn't a possibility that we could get him some whiskey, or a drink or something. They were dry. So, being very obliging to the newspaper people and the son of the president of the Southern Pacific Railroad, we arranged to have the Arizona Club, which was one of the places on Block Sixteen, which was the prostitution area of Las Vegas, opened up. We all went down and had several libations and went back to the car shortly before Wilbur arrived. So we all said our goodbyes and everything seemed to be all right until Wilbur announced the next day that he was putting in a model city at Boulder City to house the workmen, because Las Vegas was no place for people to live during the construction of the dam. I never did find out whether Shoup and all the newspaper boys told him about the visit down to Block Sixteen and the whiskey they got, or not. Anyway, they didn't get the railhead in Las Vegas.

And as I say, I was out there when Walker Young and Frank Crowe laid out the city. They first built the barracks, and then, of course, came the commissary. For a while they had a big tent out there where they were feeding people. After the commissary and barracks were constructed, then they built the houses. Meantime, the business district was developing, with merchants constructing buildings on land leased from the government. The government owned all the land in Boulder City and would only lease it, not sell it.

Now understand that before they could start the actual construction of Boulder Dam, there were two other major contracts that

had to be completed. One was the road from Boulder City to the dam site; and the second was a railroad line from the Union Pacific Railroad out to Boulder City. That is the spur line that took off the Union Pacific main line about ten miles south of Las Vegas and went out to Boulder City. The railroad line is still in service, and the Union Pacific is servicing Henderson with that Boulder City line.

At that time, there was no paved highway between Las Vegas and Boulder City. It was a dirt road and was nothing more than just a place cleared out, between here and Boulder City, so the cars *could* drive, if necessary. As they drove, ruts were dug into the dirt, about a foot or a foot and a half deep. You got your tires in the ruts, and that's where you had to stay. If somebody came along in the other direction, it was a major project to get one of the automobiles out of the rut so that the other one could pass it. But in 1932 the highway department put in a two-lane paved road which generally follows the same road that is there today.

That road was the beginning of one of the worst eras of carnage that has happened here, because the dam workers would come to Las Vegas, visit the bootlegging joints and start back to Boulder City. Often they would wind up underneath an automobile some place out on the desert. And numerous people were killed on the highway out there.

Boulder Dam. As I told you, there were very many stories out there that were told and there still are stories that could be told. There are hundreds of people who died in accidents at Boulder Dam. At one time, a bucket supposedly broke loose and buried about fifty people beneath tons of concrete; oh, that *is* a bunch of fancy because it never happened.

However, there were some very spectacular accidents up there. There was one about high

scalers who worked out there—these were people that were dangled over the walls of the canyon on a sort of a boatswain's chair, and handled the jackhammer, and knocked off all of the overhanging rock that might fall—the loose rock that might fall—during the construction of the dam, and after the dam was completed. And one day, there was a tourist out there that ventured too close to the edge, and he started slipping over. This guy that was underneath him saw the guy that was falling, and he pushed himself away from the wall of the canyon, and as this guy went by, he grabbed him by the legs and managed to get him back up onto the top of the canyon. Saved him a fall clear down to the bottom of the canyon.

But there was this—another guy that wasn't quite so lucky. He was riding a—they had these big cableways across the top of the canyon that were used to lower and raise the buckets of cement that went down. The cement plants were up on top of the canyon, and they would lower the batches of cement down by these huge buckets. They were on a big hook, and they'd just lower 'em right down from the top of the canyon. And the guys used to ride these—ride the hook up and down and pay no attention to it. It's just like construction on some of these skyscrapers. They never think anything of riding those hooks. This fellow was on with a big bucket of cement. They were about—oh, they just started in to drop when the hook broke. As he was going down, he waved to the boys goodbye, and they dug him out of about four or five feet of dirt. He hit down at the bottom of the canyon, and just dug a big hole in there. They finally got him, but he, as I say, he never wavered for a moment. He was just wavin' the boys goodbye!

And, another time down there, they had what they called a monkey-slide, which was

a sort of an elevator, an open-air elevator. It went up the side of the dam—or the face of the dam when they built the thing. There were about ten or twelve people that were on the monkey-slide, and it broke about halfway up the face of the dam and dumped them down onto a lot of steel piled on end. It just impaled three or four of these guys and bruised and injured the other people that were on the slide.

The river was running through the diversion tunnels around the dam site, at, oh, about twenty or thirty miles an hour. The scaffolding on which two men were working broke and threw them down into the river in the diversion tunnel some fifty feet below. They rode through the tunnel on the scaffold debris and came out at the other end of the tunnel below the dam and never had a scratch on tern!

So, those were some of the things that were done during the construction of the dam.

There were a lot of fine people at the Dam. I will never forget, one of them was Frank Crowe, who, as I say, was the general superintendent of the whole project. And one of the strange things about the project was that the Six Companies had figured that they were going to have to timber the diversion tunnels, which were about a thousand feet in length, I guess. And when they got into it, it was solid rock, and they didn't have to use one inch of timber. And on that thing alone, they saved about a million dollars. So they made a pretty good profit on it.

There was a fellow down there by the name of "River Joe" Whitney, who held the record for arrests in the city of Las Vegas. Every time that he'd get a pay day, Joe'd come in and get drunk and get in a fight and wind up in jail. And I think the last time he was in jail, we counted 264 times he had been in jail during the time he was here. They'd put him

in jail over the weekend, over the pay day, and let him out to go back to work. There was one time that Joe was spending quite a term in the city jail. I guess it was along toward the end of his career down here. And he was incarcerated for about thirty days, and he became a trusty. He was walking by the Apache Bar, which was a bar back in the Apache Hotel, which was where the Horseshoe Club is now. And he was walking by the bar when he met a fellow by the name of Marion Zionchek, who was the congressman from Washington—the state of Washington—who had been in the headlines for quite some time previous with rather eccentric acts that he was putting on back in the halls of Congress; he was out here for a vacation. And just as Joe was walking by, Zionchek came out of the bar. Zionchek stopped Joe and asked him what he was doing, and Joe told him he was a trusty in jail, and Zionchek wanted to know how he was getting along. "Well," he said, "fine, but we'd get along a lot better if we had some whiskey."

Zionchek went back into the bar and bought four or five bottles of whiskey and gave them to Joe. This was after the county had moved out of their portion of the jail, and the city was operating the front part of the jail as well as the back part. And all of the prisoners who had been sentenced were sent up to the front part of the jail. There were about six or eight guys in there, so Joe smuggled the whiskey into the jail cell, and before anybody knew it, they were having a big, wild party, and everybody was getting drunk. They got in a fight, and some way, Joe got his throat cut from ear to ear, but very fortunately, it was only a flesh wound. The jailer took him out to the then county hospital and had him sewed up and brought him back. Joe recovered and went back to work out at the Dam.

And the last I heard of River Joe Whitney—I was quite well acquainted with

him, because on my beat in the newspaper, I used to give him a good write-up every time he got put in jail, so he called me his publicity agent, and I got quite well acquainted with him. And the last I heard of him, during World War II, he was working on the Al-Can Highway. Prior to that time, he was working on the dam project up by Redding, California. And I read in the paper where Joe and some of the B-girls in one of the bars got out in a town fountain and disrobed and started taking a bath in the fountain. So he made himself a bucket up in Redding, too.

There was another guy by the name of "Pickpockets," or we called him "Pickpockets" because of the fact that his hands were as large as the ordinary man's two hands. They were so large that he couldn't get them in a pocket if he had to. He worked out at the dam also. And his demise was caused by his betting somebody at the bar that he could drink a quart of whiskey without taking it from his lips. He drank the quart of whiskey, but about ten minutes later, he dropped dead. So that was the last of Pickpockets.

I mentioned having been out at the site at Boulder City with Walker Young and Frank Crowe when they were laying out the town. Did they discuss with me what was in their minds as they tried to put together this model city? Oh, yes. They had a large piece of drawing paper. Crowe would draw the plan on the ground, alongside this piece of drawing paper, and Young would transfer it to the drawing paper. From these very rough drawings, which they took to the engineers in the engineering department, the plot plan for Boulder City was drawn up.

What kind of advice did they have in putting together what they figured would be a model community? Well, for Boulder City they had one street that ran at the top of the hill that overlooks the lake, which was

reserved for homes for all the executives of Six Companies and the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau of Reclamation office was placed where it is now, on top of the hill that overlooks the valley toward the lake. And then the streets were all drawn up, and they showed where the dormitories—the temporary dormitories—would go and where they would have the business district, a park, a school, and offices, and made a model city out of it. If you could see the original plans that were drawn for the town, you would say that it was a model city, because they've got the main street and other streets running in sort of circles out there, and it's real, real good.

Did they have any particular sociological ideas about how this city ought to go together; more than just from an engineering standpoint? No, no, this was just engineering. As far as the sociology of the area is concerned, the only thing that wasn't allowed was gambling and liquor. It was a government reservation; there was no gambling and no liquor.

A great deal of the time when they were building the dam, they had a stockade right at the edge of the reservation on the highway that led into Boulder City. And all cars would be stopped and searched for liquor, and if there was any liquor found in the cars, they'd impound the cars. Then those workmen would have to come out and get 'em the next day, or if they were drunk, they'd impound the cars, too. So that's the way they kept 'em in line.

Well, the chief of police, I guess it was, was Bud Bodell, who came here from Ely, where he was chief of police in Ely. And he became the law in Boulder City, and he single-handedly prevented a strike out there. The IWW boys were talking about strike and so forth, and there was a fellow out there by the name of Red (I've forgotten what his last name is now). But he was the leader of the

outfit, and they had been in the Anderson Commissary eating breakfast, and they came out and were talking strike, and Bud told this Red, he said, "All right, you been out here talking strike, now," and he said, "You can whup me, you go ahead 'n take your strike. If I whup you, then you git off the reservation and don't come back,"

And so Red says, "It's okay with me."

So they got out there and fought for, oh, an hour, or an hour and a half, and just beat the dickens out of each other, but Bud finally got him to admit that he was whipped, and he walked off the job and never came back. Of course, they never had too much labor trouble out there—out there in the Dam—because it was during the Depression; nobody was about to lose a job that was paying real good money at that time by any union activity. So they never had any union problems out there at all.

They did have several people out there who were working in the tunnels who filed suit against Six Companies because of the—oh, they charged that because of the carbon monoxide gas that was in the tunnels that they had been seriously affected one way or another. One guy charged that he had lost his sexual powers because of the carbon monoxide gas. The same attorney was representing all of these clients, and he figured that if he could win one suit, then the Six Companies would settle the rest of 'em. So the Six Companies decided, well, all right, if we're going to fight this thing, we're goin' to fight the toughest one to beat, and they picked this one. The trial went on for weeks and weeks and weeks. Bud Bodell, who was the investigator for the Six Companies, tied this guy up in knots because the plaintiff had gone to Los Angeles and made dates with women. A special investigator followed the complainant to the hotels and listened in on conversations with these women, proving the guy was just

as potent as anybody could be. So he lost the case. They had a parade of witnesses at the trial and all these women that he had made progress with, and it was quite a case. The court dismissed all the rest of the complaints. They never even tried to fight them.

#### ENTERTAINMENT AND TOURISM

It was about the time the darn was started, that the Cornero brothers became interested in the city of Las Vegas. And I might say that everybody thought at the time that if there were ever to be any nightclubs or anything of that sort, they would be established on the Boulder Dam Highway, just outside of the city of Las Vegas. And as a result, there were several pretty nice nightclubs for the time that were out in the area of where Fremont Street and Charleston Boulevard come together on the eastern edge of the community. And there was, well, the Green Shack was one of the best eating places in Las Vegas at the time, and you could go out there and get a large T-bone steak and French fried potatoes and biscuit and honey and dessert and coffee for about a dollar and a .half. And there was the Yucca Club, which was run by Paul Warner, who later became an assemblyman from Las Vegas. And there was the L. A. Deer Parlor, the Bull Pen, the Red Mill. After the Coroneros were in here, there was a group that set up the Colony Club, which was in operation during World War II. I'll get back to the Colony Club when I talk about Nellis Air Force Base.

But the Coroneros decided that they were going to put in a nightclub, or resort hotel, in Las Vegas, and they chose a place out about where the Montgomery Ward store is now. That was way out in the country, as far as Las Vegas was concerned back there in those days. Tony Cornero, at that time, was serving time in the federal penitentiary in Washington

on some sort of a charge, I guess it was bootlegging or rum running. And Frankie and Louis, his two brothers, were up here in charge of construction.

The story that went around the city of Las Vegas at the time they came up here was that the then powers that be in the city of Las Vegas promised them that if they would come up and build the nightclub here in Las Vegas, that they could have exclusive rights to the prostitution. The city of Las Vegas would close down prostitution on Block Sixteen, move it up to their hotel, and that they could set up gambling out there. At that time, gambling was not legal. But they could set up gambling out there and run gambling, liquor, and prostitution exclusively in this area. So they got the hotel started out there, and started construction, and the city commissioners backed off from closing off Block Sixteen and closing all the bootlegging joints downtown. So, these powers that be, so-called, had to back off from their promise, if any, to the Corneros.

And the Corneros weren't averse to taking anybody for a ride. So one of the people who was involved in the thing, who later became a district judge in the northern part of the state of Nevada, disappeared, overnight. He was a scapegoat for the other people who made these promises. And the Corneros had to be satisfied because they had their place about three quarters completed, and couldn't pull out.

It was quite an establishment. They had the gaming casino in the south wing of the club room, and around the walls, they had little parapets behind which sat guys with 30-30 rifles. They had about four of them up there, so that if anybody ever came in and started to heist the joint, they were ready to take care of 'em. One guard always sat there, all during the time that the gambling was going

on. There was a bar right off the gambling casino, and the dining room was across the lobby from the gambling casino to the north. And this was the popular place for Las Vegans to go for as long as the place was open.

When they had the opening night, Tony wasn't here. He was still in Washington. But Frankie and Louie were there in their tuxedos, and Mrs. Cornero, their mother, was there, too. Incidentally, their names were Stralla. That was their right names, and their aliases were Cornero. And everybody who went to the opening that night had to wear a tux. Now this was in 1929, and there were very few people outside the members of the Las Vegas Elks Lodge who had tuxes. So there was a grand scurrying to get the tuxes in for the opening. And that is the opening that set the stage for all future openings in the city of Las Vegas by the resort hotels.

I became very well acquainted with Frankie Cornero. He was a real nice little Italian guy. He was about five feet seven inches tall, and had a very dashing mustache, which he waxed. The last time I saw him—my wife and I went up to Mt. Charleston for a weekend, and as we went up to our cottage and were going in, Frankie was coming out. He had had the cottage for a couple of weeks and was just getting out on the weekend, and we took it over. And we talked for a little while, and he said goodbye. He then started driving down the hill and lost control of his automobile and was killed. So that was how I knew Frankie Cornero.

Getting back to the police station also, it was over on Second Street behind what now is the Horseshoe restaurant on the north side of the alley that runs between Second Street and First Street. This was a small building; the front of the building was operated by Clark County as a county jail, and the back portion of the jail was known as the famous

"Blue Room" of the city. It was a room, oh, I should judge it was about fifty by thirty, and had very limited—and when I say limited, I do mean limited—sanitary facilities. And it could comfortably hold about, oh, twenty-five people. And on Saturday nights, or on pay day nights, from the dam, they'd have as many as a hundred or a hundred and fifty in there, stacked up like cordwood. And it was a real mess. If they had it today, Las Vegas probably would be credited with being, oh, I don't know what, but, not favorable to anybody. I mean if we had had any Negro problem in the city of Las Vegas like we have in the country today, we'd have had some real bad riots.

Most of our colored people were living on North First Street, across the street from Block Sixteen, and I guess there were, oh, twenty-five, thirty people, maybe fifty, and they were all part of the community. I can remember several of the people. There was Art "Shorty" Hodges, who was the shoe shine boy at Art Harris's barber shop. He used to attend the American Legion-sponsored prizefights over on Third Street by the courthouse and just have a real big time; he was accepted by all of the local people. There wasn't anybody in the whole Negro population that wasn't liked and respected in the community. Mammy Pinkston used to have what she called a "plantation kitchen" down on let's see, it was Third Street, I guess, between Ogden and Stewart. The local people used to go there to get southern fried chicken, and it was. We had no real problems with the colored people at that time. They were a part of any celebration that we had in the community, and everything was all right.

After World War II, it was quite evident that everybody in the United States was ready for travel. I might digress for a moment by saying that around 1938, a man by the name of Tom Hull, who was a hotel man from

California, came to Las Vegas to visit, and when he was returning to Los Angeles, he got out where El Rancho now stands and had a flat tire. While he was waiting for somebody to come out and fix the flat tire, he noticed how many automobiles were passing the site and decided that he would build a motel in Las Vegas to take advantage of the tourist travel, which he was sure would become even greater than it was at that time. So he put together a plan to build this motel. Then some of the local people suggested to him that, to take advantage of legalized gambling, that he should build a gambling casino with motel rooms around it. And as a result, the Hotel El Rancho was constructed, where it stood so many years before being burned down, as the start of the Strip.

Shortly after El Rancho was opened, a man by the name of D. W. Griffith, a Texas and Oklahoma theater chain operator, came to Las Vegas for a visit, and he saw the success El Rancho had had, so he decided that he would build a hotel and name it the Last Frontier. "The early West in modern splendor" as the slogan for his hotel. And he built the Hotel Last Frontier on the site of the Hotel Frontier of the present day.

The property which Griffith bought for the Hotel Last Frontier had been developed in the Boulder Dam construction era, with a well drilled to provide water and a nightclub building erected there. The building was a substantial one, but the nightclub was not a success in the dam era. Then Guy McAfee, who had come to Las Vegas from Los Angeles, and later was to become a big time Las Vegas gambler, had leased the nightclub and operated it for a while as the "91 Club." However, he had closed it before Griffith became interested in the property.

Griffith incorporated the nightclub structure with its large stone fireplace into

the main hotel building, making it a bar area and part of the gambling casino of his hotel.

When Tommy Hull built his El Rancho and opened it in 1940, all of the people in the city of Las Vegas said the thing would never go because it was too far out of town. At the time he started in 1939, the city of Las Vegas ended at Fifth and Charleston Streets, and from there on in it was just mainly desert. The road out on the Strip—on what is now known as the Strip—was the two-lane paved state highway 91, leading to the Nevada-California state line. So when El Rancho became a success, and the Last Frontier was constructed, some of the people of Las Vegas, the same ones that were criticizing El Rancho, said that well, maybe one hotel might go, but two will—they'll both go broke. And when "Bugsy" Siegel came in to put the Flamingo Hotel clear out of town, "halfway to Los Angeles," these same people said that he was nuts and that all three hotels would go broke. And it's been that way with every hotel that has been built—they all would go broke—but I think the present day picture will show that the potential is still there.

Tommy Hull undoubtedly was the father of tourism in the city of Las Vegas, because the movie stars and the people of Hollywood found Las Vegas was an excellent place to relax. And as a result, they used to come up here. As the movie stars came, others came to see the movie stars, and others came to see the others, and pretty soon we had a real great tourist industry going on, which still is going on and probably will go on forever.

When the Flamingo Hotel was built, the Chamber of Commerce and everybody just welcomed the National Distillers' money into the development of the Flamingo Hotel. And at that time, the community did not know, nor did the state know, that the money that was in the National Distillers was the money that

Murder, Incorporated, had gone legitimate with. They had bought the National Distillers so that they could pour their gang money into a legitimate proposition. And, of course, at that time, there was not enough gambling in the state of Nevada so that there would not be any necessity for great controls. Most of the controls were left to the cities and counties themselves, and there was no need to go into the background of any of these people, like they do now.

The front man for the National Distillers was Benny Siegel, more commonly known as "Bugsy," and he was one of the executioners for Murder, Incorporated. I became quite well acquainted with Benny, because he used to go up to the health club that was above the Westerner on Fremont Street, between Main and First Street. It was run by Lenny Shafer, who now is the vice president of the Hacienda Hotel. Benny and I used to meet in the steam room of Lenny's health club a couple of times a week, and as I say, I became quite well acquainted with him.

At the time, the county commissioners had not been approached for a license for the Flamingo Hotel. I had learned from one of the members of the county commissioners that he was going to vote against the license for the hotel. And I told Benny that he was gonna have to do some homework and fence mending, and I told him who the member of the county commission was, and he asked me if I could arrange a meeting between him and this county commissioner. I told him I would, and so I brought this county commissioner up to the health club, which had an office in front, and introduced him to Benny Siegel. I did not stay for the meeting that they had, but at the next meeting of the county commissioners, a permit for gambling and liquor was issued to Benny Siegel for the Flamingo Hotel. I merely state that I left the meeting; I don't know what

went on, but I do know that they got their permit, so that's that.

Well, I might say that Benny Siegel probably was one of the most—he was a very dapper chap, very good looking, dark complexion, deep colored eyes—I've forgotten whether they were brown or black—black hair; and he was very careful about his dress and his whole body. He was very perturbed whenever he got a blemish on his body at all, a pimple on his face, or some skin eruption on his body, or something of that sort. And I couldn't help but think when I saw a picture of Benny Siegel after he had been shot in the Beverly Hills residence of his girl friend, with his one eye dangling down, where the bullet had knocked his eye out, and his face was all over blood, and I thought, at the time, "If Benny could only see himself now," because he was so careful about his personal appearance, and the picture didn't do him justice.

I think that one of the last times that I saw Benny was at the Flamingo Hotel when his girl friend, Virginia Hill, and he entertained a group of businessmen, all of the city of Las Vegas. There was myself and my wife, and my brother and his wife, and Mr. Frank Garside and his wife, and a couple of city officials who were entertained by Benny. And I can remember Benny coming down to the dinner in a shirt with no tie on, and no jacket on. Virginia met him at the door and just raised the dickens with him, because he was the host of a party of local people and showed up without a tie and a coat on. She sent him—chased him—back up to the suite to get a coat and tie.

My wife sat alongside of Virginia Hill at the dinner party. She told me afterwards that she was a typical mob moll. In fact, she got the impression that Virginia might have been a prostitute. And this is the reputation that she had—that she was one of the best prostitutes

in the whole Murder, Incorporated outfit, and Benny Siegel had glommed onto her and made her his. That party was about a week before Benny was murdered in Beverly Hills.

George Raft was a very good friend of Benny's, and he came up for the opening of the Flamingo Hotel and was one of the big stars at the opening, which incidentally—and in all due respect to Benny Siegel—the Las Vegas tourist trade and the availability of good accommodations were publicized nationally as a result of Benny Siegel coming into Las Vegas and the Flamingo Hotel. There isn't any doubt in the world that the National Distillers and Murder, Incorporated, had connections with the press all over the United States, and the opening of the Flamingo Hotel drew people from all over the eastern part of the nation and gave exposure to Las Vegas and its resort industry as a direct result of the construction of the Flamingo Hotel. Prior to that time, the Last Frontier and El Rancho Vegas had become known regionally, mostly in Hollywood and Los Angeles. The Flamingo certainly gave rise to *national* publicity.

Then, after the Flamingo came the Desert Inn and Thunderbird, then the old Bingo Club was turned into the Sahara. Then the hotels came so fast and furiously that I lost track of the sequence in which they came. However, the original tourist area along the Strip was El Rancho, the Last Frontier, and the Flamingo. Then the others came along until now, you see what we've got on the Strip. When I first came to Las Vegas, the property out on where the Strip is now could've been bought for twenty-five dollars an acre or for taxes. Now, the land is selling for thousands of dollars a front foot.

People would always ask me why I didn't cash in on all of that boom that went on out on the Strip. My only answer is that when I first came down here, there was a Depression, and who'd have had twenty-five dollars? The

second answer is, sure, I could've picked the stuff up for let's say a hundred dollars an acre. If somebody'd come along two or three years later and offered me five hundred dollars an acre, I would have said, "Look what a sucker I've got!" Because there was no development out there on the Strip up until 1939, '40, and, as I said before, who knew the hotels were going to develop out there? It wasn't the guy that made the first investment in property out there that made the money; it was about the fourth or fifth turnover. Because you pay fifty dollars an acre for it, you sell it for a hundred, the next guy sells it for two hundred, and the next guy sells it for five hundred, and everybody's made money and everybody's happy. This thousand dollars a front foot out there certainly did not obtain during the time that we were growing up in the city of Las Vegas.

And, then there is the fact that nobody ever told us we were going to get old when we were in—around the 1930's and '35. Tomorrow was a long way off, next week was further, and next year didn't ever seem to come. Who put away anything for a rainy day in those days? If you lived a good life and had three square meals a day and a good time, that was all that was necessary. And as I say, nobody ever told us we were going to get old.

So that's about the story as far as the development of the Strip is concerned. It's very interesting to know these people who developed the Strip. I might call attention especially to William J. Moore, "Bill" Moore, who was the builder of the Last Frontier. He was Griffith's nephew, and a graduate architect. Be laid out the plans for the Last Frontier, which was a long, rambling building with a center lobby and rooms to the rear and through the—you left the lobby and went to the south into the main dining room—the Ramona Room. And this was the—the place

to be for any event in the, oh, between 1941 and after the War. A lot of wedding receptions were held there, dinner parties for luminaries, the Kiwanis Club and the Rotary Club met at the Last Frontier Hotel. The Carillo Room, which was named for Leo Carillo, was a very intimate little bar with a fireplace at the end of it, and this was the fireplace I was talking about when they gave the Christmas party for the kids out at the air base. Then the gambling casino was in between the Carillo Room and the Horn Room.

The Horn Room was the farthest south of any of the rooms in the hotel. And this was called the Horn Room because it was decorated with horns of all types—longhorn steers and, oh, all kinds of animal horns were scattered around the walls of the room. And at the west end of the room was a huge mural depicting a card game with the worst-looking hag a man has ever seen either intimately or portrayed on canvas, who had a bottle of whiskey in her hand and a glass in the other, indicating that she was nothing more than an alcoholic. What happened was, the guy who painted the mural had indicated that this was his wife. And this was the way that he got even with her, because he exposed her to the eyes of all the people who came in to the Last Frontier barroom. And it was quite a mural, and dominated the entire room, despite the fact that it was decorated all over with the horns.

As I started to say, Bill Moore built the hotel, and after it was finished, he remained here to manage the hotel. He made a real great success of the thing, and at the time, he was probably the number one citizen of Clark County. He was elected president of the Chamber of Commerce twice, and as I say, he was an outstanding gentleman. And it only goes to show how fickle fame may be, because Bill got himself mixed up with some

unfortunate investments. After Mr. Griffith died, the other members of the Griffith family were opposed to operating the hotel and gambling. They said that they were theater operators and didn't know anything about operating a hotel, so they sold the hotel. But it just went down and down and changed hands four or five times.

And one of the tragedies of the Last Frontier Hotel was that in the Ramona Room, there was some very beautiful stonework. The Hopi Indians from Arizona were brought in here to put the stonework in place, and it was beautifully done. It was—all one wall was this stonework and when the new owner, Jake Kozloff, came into the picture, he couldn't stand the stonework, so he painted it. I've forgotten whether he painted it white, or what it was, but he just ruined the most beautiful piece of stonework that was ever in the city of Las Vegas.

And also in the Horn Room, they had the bar that came out of the Arizona Club, which was one of the places on Block Sixteen—that was the largest place on Block Sixteen. And the bar that they had there was a beautiful mahogany bar, and the back bar was beautiful mahogany, carved, and it was, oh, about, maybe fifty, seventy-five feet long. And the back bar, of course, had the mirrors in it, and it was a typical, old Western bar. It had been specially made and brought by train from New York City in 1905 when Las Vegas became a town. The Arizona Club on North First Street was the first permanent building in Las Vegas, and as I say, it was a beautiful bar. And the front of the entrance to the Horn Room was leaded, beveled glass, colored glass, from the front of the Arizona Club. And when Kozloff got control of the Last Frontier, he not only painted the Ramona Room stonework, but he also covered over the bar with a dirty, dun-colored paint that just killed the beauty

of the bar of highly polished mahogany. I don't know where the bar is now. We did have a possibility that when they tore down that part of the Frontier to build the present Frontier, that we would get the bar for a museum either in Carson City or Reno. But Maurice Friedman, who built the building—or, built the Frontier—put the kibosh on ever letting that out to anybody. And he, I suppose, has it. That he did with it, I don't know.

#### LAS VEGAS VALLEY WATER PROBLEMS

Now, one of the greatest questions that I am asked, as managing director of the Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation by these people that might be coming in to the state is, "What is your water situation?" Well, our water situation at the present time is okay. It hasn't been, in the past.

And to get into the past history of the water situation in the state of Nevada, or in southern Nevada, I might say that even the pioneers in this area—Kit Carson and John C. Fremont and those early travelers into the Las Vegas area, found this to be a large artesian basin. The word *las vegas* in Spanish means "the meadows," "the green plains." And this came about because of two large natural springs which fed a large stream which flowed from west to east in the Las Vegas Valley area. When the San Pedro-Los Angeles-Salt Lake Railroad established Las Vegas in 1905 as a division point on the new railroad line, the company formed a subsidiary known as the Las Vegas Land and Water Company. The Big Springs were tapped for the community water supply and wooden pipes carried the flow to the business and housing district in "Clark's Original Townsite," which was Las Vegas proper, now the downtown area. As the town grew, wells were drilled in the vicinity of the Springs and reservoirs were erected to

increase the water supply from the artesian basin.

The springs and wells are located out where the Las Vegas Valley Water District offices are, out west of town, approximately a mile and a half from the railroad underpass. And these were bubbling springs; I mean that the water came to the surface with powerful force. The story is told that the Indians used to take their youngsters out to the Big Springs and throw them into the water, and the children would not sink, and would bounce around on the surface of the water. So the water has been there for many, many centuries.

There are many theories as to where the water comes from. One of them which everybody knows who has read anything about the state of Nevada is that there are two sinks, Humboldt Sink and Carson Sink, in the northern part of the state. These sinks never rise or never fall. They stay about the same level despite the fact that there are several streams that empty into these sinks. And some people feel that water from the Humboldt Sink and the Carson Sink comes through aquifers, down, running southward through the Amargosa Desert and form the Amargosa River. The Amargosa River—used to be, that is—it used to run along the top of the ground for maybe four or five miles, and then disappear and be gone for five or six miles, and then reappear, and then disappear again. That's one theory of the source of the water that comes in to the underground table here.

I do know that Dr. William S. Park had a theory on the source. He was quite an archaeologist, collected Indian artifacts and knew this area very, very well. Dr. Park told Jimmy Down, who now is a real estate man in the city of Las Vegas but at that time was president of the Junior Chamber

of Commerce, that he had found a cave somewhere around here in which, when you went in a certain distance, you could hear the roar of a river. And he was certain that this was an underground river that was flowing into this area, and whether the river went into the Colorado River or where it went, nobody knew. He never did show anybody where this river was.

However, just recently, there were two kids who went out to the Ash Meadows area and entered what was called Devil's Hole. And they were scuba divers, and went down to investigate what was down underneath in the Devil's Hole, and never came back. It was impossible to recover their bodies, even though other scuba divers from this area went up there and explored all of the fingers of this Devil's Hole. They came back with the information that this is a tremendous area, filled with water, and there were fingers that dart off in all directions. And it is something that nobody knows where the water comes from; nobody knows where it goes, but it's there.

Another theory, of course, is that the underground basin here is fed by the runoff from Charleston Mountains. Well, to me, this doesn't make sense, because certainly, of course, the springs in Charleston Mountains that might be fed by the snow on Charleston fluctuate with the depth of the snow in the wintertime. However, Devil's Hole and the rest of these places never fluctuate. They're still there, no matter how or what the snowfall is. So I don't know where the water comes from. However, that is neither here nor there.

We were very highly blessed with having an artesian basin in the city of Las Vegas and in this valley. The San Pedro-Salt Lake Railroad, now the Union Pacific, chose this community as a division point on the railroad mainly because of the Big Springs and the

availability of water for their steam engines, steam engines being in use at that time. This was a very good division point—from San Bernardino to Las Vegas, and then from Las Vegas to Milford, and Milford to Ogden. So that is why the Los-Angeles-San Pedro-Salt Lake Railroad chose this as a division point. And that goes to the foundation of the city of Las Vegas.

In 1905, in May, it was May 15, 1905, the L. A., San Pedro, and Salt Lake Railroad held an auction in Las Vegas in which lots in the Clarks Original Townsite would go to the highest bidder. The lots along Fremont Street were sold for \$225-\$250. Of course, at that time in 1905, \$250 was a lot of money. However, when you now figure that they're now selling for \$250 or more a front foot, it makes a big difference.

To supply the residents of the new town, the Union Pacific Railroad set up the Las Vegas Land and Water Company, of which Walter Bracken was made the manager. And the railroad company laid the mains and laterals in the downtown area to serve the then growing community. And the mains were all wooden mains, and this developed into quite a problem later on when the wood started to rot and leaks would appear in the wooden pipe and break down streets and flood houses, and so forth and so on. This was quite a deal in the early days. And incidentally, nobody kept a record of where the mains were after they were laid, because it wasn't important as there weren't very many people being served by the mains.

The Las Vegas Land and Water Company maintained its control on the water supply in the city of Las Vegas until, oh, about 1940, when it was decided that the town was getting so large that the Union Pacific couldn't finance the water company because of the expanding necessity for laterals and mains and new wells.

I might say that the water was supplied up to that time from the Big Springs and wells up where the Las Vegas Land and Water Company offices are now. And the city of Las Vegas was expanding so fast that the Union Pacific just wasn't about to take on the job of supplying the city of Las Vegas with water.

So the Las Vegas Valley Water District was formed at that time, and they took over the water system. Well, the wooden mains at that time were getting so rotten, and they'd break out often, causing floods and so forth, So the first job of the Las Vegas Valley Water District was to put in mains and laterals to take care of the area that had been served by the Las Vegas Land and Water Company. This had to be done despite the fact that when the Las Vegas Valley Water District was formed as a public corporation, it was supposed to be run by the revenues from the water distribution and sale.

The city of Las Vegas continued to expand, and there was a necessity for bringing in water from Lake Mead. And this is where the foresight of Johnny Mueller and Al Cahlan of the Colorado River Commission and Howard Eells, builder of the Basic Magnesium, Incorporated, plant at Henderson, came in. When They were building the pipeline into Basic from Lake Head, they decided it would be necessary to bring in water from Lake Mead to Las Vegas to take care of the growing demand for water.

The fact of the matter is, that after—or the first four or five years that the Water District was in business here, we had water rationing. And you could water your lawns, one side of the street one day, and the other side, the next. And they were quite strict in enforcing the thing, because water was really short. And that was the time when they were still using swamp coolers and practically every home in the city of Las Vegas had a

swamp cooler—including the business houses downtown. And those swamp coolers used a lot of water. And it was about that time, too, that the people in the city of Las Vegas became interested in lawns and gardens. And this increased the demand on water.

So it was decided that they were going to have to bring water in from Lake Mead and in order to do so, they put meters—they started metering the water—and there was a real big scream about metering water because, prior to the time that the Las Vegas Valley Water District went into operation, the Union Pacific was supplying water for the people of the city of Las Vegas at a flat rate of three dollars a month, no matter how much was used. And this was quite a deal for a desert country when you could get your water for three dollars a month. So it was decided that they would put meters on, despite the fact that the people were squawking.

The first meter formula zoomed water bills to around forty or fifty dollars a month for some people in the city of Las Vegas. And finally, George Ullom, who was on the Water Board and later became city manager of Las Vegas, worked out a formula for water based on a flat rate plus additional gallonage. This started in to equalize the water rates in the entire community, and it has been effective ever since it was first promulgated. And while water bills in Las Vegas appear to be quite high, they are generally equitable with other desert areas.

I have a large area of cultivated ground. I've got a hundred and eight feet across the front and about a hundred feet deep in lawn, and then another hundred and eight feet with about thirty feet deep in lawn. So that's quite an area. My water bill in the summertime will run twenty or twenty-two dollars, which is not bad for all that irrigation and in the desert country, because water is the lifeblood of any

desert country, and if you want to make it bloom, you've got to use water.

After the Las Vegas Valley Water District got in operation and got the new mains laid, the service was much better, and everybody became cognizant of the fact that the Water District was doing a pretty good job of keeping ahead of the growth of the city of Las Vegas. And now, we are faced with continuing growth, and if the population of this valley does grow to a million people in 1980, we're going to have to have more water. And that is why the Southern Nevada Water Project was promoted before Congress by Senators Bible and Cannon.

Now this project calls for establishing an additional pumping facility on the lake, at Lake Mead, and driving a tunnel through the mountain out there by the lake and running the pipeline through the tunnel and down into the valley area and pumping it up into the Las Vegas section. It's an eighty-one million-dollar project, and the contract for the first phase of it was let in 1968, and is underway at the present time. This will bring enough water into the valley to take care of our needs until about the year 2000. After that, who knows? The state of Nevada is guaranteed 300,000 acre feet of water out of Lake Mead under a division of waters approved by the Supreme Court; and the 300,000 acre feet of water has been—it has been said that this will take care of us until the year 2000 unless there are some unforeseen, large developments. And so our water problems are in the future. After the year 2000, who knows?

There is a program underway or under study now to link Alaska, Canada, the United States, and Mexico into a giant water diversion deal where rivers on the west side of the Rockies would be diverted into storage lakes in various areas, one in the northern part of the state of Nevada, and the other one at Lake

Mead, and the rivers on the eastern side of the Rockies would be dumped into the reservoirs that will supply all that area. It's something that's going to take a lot of work, but I think that the necessity for water is going to send these people to the realization that we've got to assist each other in this water thing, if we are to survive. There's a lot of water that's running from Alaska into the Bering Sea that is wasted. There's a lot of water that's running from the Columbia River into the Pacific Ocean that is wasted. Whether the politicians of these areas can ever be convinced that they should share their water is something for the politicians to determine. But I am sure as the United States faces the proposition of either drying up or sharing water that they'd do the latter. By the year 2000, we may have enough water down here to take care of a population of five million people—if we can get water in here, five million is not out of the realm of possibility.

### NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE

It was just before the outbreak of World War II, about 1939, that the interest of the United States Army Air Corps became intense in the area for the development of an aerial gunnery school. To get the full picture of the development of the aerial gunnery school, we will have to get into the political situation in the city of Las Vegas, which was very interesting and probably one of the most troublesome negotiation periods that I have ever entered into.

Along about 1938, a new mayor of the city of Las Vegas was elected in the person of John L. Russell, who was practically unknown. And he entered the political arena as a candidate for mayor against Ernie Cragin and another candidate whose name skips my mind. But anyway, the split between Ernie Cragin and

this other man put Johnny Russell in as mayor of the city of Las Vegas. It was only a couple of meetings after he was sworn in that it was evident that there was going to be a great rift develop between the mayor and the city commission.

All of the members of the city commission were old timers in the city of Las Vegas, and had played a great part developing the community. Russell seemed to desire to be a dictator, and whatever he said would have to go, despite the fact that there was no unanimity on the part of the city commission. The commission at that time was composed of C. V. T. Gilbert, Joe Ronnow, Al Corradetti, and the fourth member was Harve Perry. As a result of the constant bickering, Corradetti, Gilbert, and Ronnow resigned as members of the city commission, and the mayor took it upon himself to find their successors. (Corradetti withdrew his resignation and was reappointed.) And the men appointed were Charles R. "Pat" Clark, Bill Gore, and Robert J. Kaltenborn.

Shortly after the announcement of the replacements was made, the original city commission members rescinded their resignations, and Mayor Russell refused to recognize the withdrawal of the resignations. So at the time, there were two boards of city commissioners acting on behalf of the city of Las Vegas, and the two commissions were fighting desperately at all times.

It was into this double city commission situation that the Army Air Force came to start negotiations for the air base site, which was located where Nellis Air Force Base is now located. The field was being used by Western Air Express as a commercial air field. It was necessary for the owner of the air field, who was P. A. "Pop" Simon, a very highly respected citizen of Las Vegas, who owned the place; Western Air Express who leased

it; and the city of Las Vegas, who wanted to purchase it, to get into a three-cornered fight for the ownership of the area. It was necessary for the Army to send in the negotiators to whip out all of the details necessary for transfer of ownership to the United States government. Simon was perfectly willing to sell the property; Western Air was convinced that it would be for the best interests for not only the city of Las Vegas but the air lines as well to share the air field with the federal government, providing the city of Las Vegas would give title to another airport that could be used after the Air Force kicked 'em off the air field that was being used.

So it was necessary to find a new site for an airport in the city of Las Vegas. At that time, Robert B. "Bob" Griffith, Al Corradetti, and I were very instrumental in selecting the new site for the new airport to be provided for Western Air. There were three sites suggested. One was in the western section of the city about where the present North Las Vegas Airport is located; the second one was down at the bottom of the hill where Fremont and Charleston come together, where the city owned some land; and the third site was where the present McCarran Field stands. The CAA was brought into the picture, and after a great deal of survey, decided that the McCarran Air Field site was the best for the general use of Western Air. It must be remembered that at the time, Western Air was the only air line that was using the old McCarran Field where Nellis Air Force Base is now.

Then it became necessary for the federal government to come in here and negotiate with the city of Las Vegas for the operation of the air field where Nellis is. They sent in engineers, and their lowest grade was a major, and the top grade was a major general. And for four or five days, these people met with the two city commissions. And every step of

the way, it took action on the part of both city commissions to work out the leases.

Al Corradetti was a member of both commissions as he originally withdrew his resignation before the others did and was replaced on the original board. And he worked as a liaison man between the two boards.

One board would meet in the east end of the city hall, which then was in the old library building on the grounds of the courthouse, and the other commission would meet at the west end, with Mayor Russell in the middle. And every step, as I say, every step of the way, the two commissions acted on the terms of the lease, and at last, the lease was worked out, and both city commissions signed, and the mayor signed the lease. And I think if you go back to the archives of the Army Air Force, you'll see the lease that was signed by both commissions.

And for the first time in many, many months, at the conclusion of the lease signing, the two commissions plus the Air Force, or Army Air Force officers, got together at the Green Shack for a celebration of the signing of the lease. And it was one of the wildest parties that had been put on in the city of Las Vegas for many, many months.

After the lease was signed, the Air Force sent the original cadre to Las Vegas to start construction of the gunnery school. Martines Stenseth was the commanding officer. He was a colonel at the time, and he brought in as his staff officers Major Herbert "Andy" Anderson, Major Robbie Robertson, Captain Harvey Huglin, Lieutenant Robert "Bob" Gardner, Major Swanson, and Captain Harry Billings. And they established headquarters in the basement of the post office building at the end of Third Street.

It was my privilege to be in on the development of the gunnery school from

the very first, as I was the "unofficial" housing officer of the city of Las Vegas. When the original cadre came in to Las Vegas, they came into the *Review-Journal* office and were inquiring for housing. They wanted to put ads in the paper regarding housing facilities. As I was interested in the development of the original lease on the airport, I became very interested in the establishment of the gunnery school. It was about the time, in the late spring, when school was letting out, and very fortunately, many of the teachers in the city schools (which were not nearly as large as they are now—the schools, I'm talking about) were leaving for their summer vacations or further education—educational activity in other universities—and houses were being leased or rented for the summer term, while they were gone to pursue their summer activities. In this way, we had about a three months' break and got the entire cadre established in residences in the city of Las Vegas. Those who were not established there were Colonel Stenseth, Major Anderson and Major Robertson, who were staying at El Rancho, and they remained at El Rancho during their entire stay in the city of Las Vegas. However, the others were placed in homes that could be rented in the summer, and that gave us three months to look for new places as they developed. And then, too, there were some homes being built out at the air base.

But all during the time that the people were here during the War, there was no problem as far as housing was concerned. It was quite interesting that, if a colonel was transferred out of Las Vegas to some other post, the lieutenant colonel would move into the colonel's house, a major would move into the lieutenant colonel's house, a captain would move into the major's house, and it'd go clear down to the second lieutenant. And on each move, they would have better quarters, of course.

It was quite interesting that the development of the gunnery school was not financed, or the equipment was not financed, through the federal government. About the only thing that the government did was to build the base. Of course, the runways were in and there were some buildings out there. But they just built the buildings for the housing of the troops, and as far as equipment was concerned, there was no appropriation made for equipment, except, of course, the airplanes that were brought in here.

The gunnery school started their students through a routine that—it was a flexible gunnery school, and it was meant to train guards for the big flying fortresses that were being used in World War II. The training started with B-B guns, worked on through .22 rifles, then on to skeet and shotguns, and from shotguns up to machine guns—fifty-caliber machine guns. In this way, the students were taught how to hit (1) slowly moving targets, and then moving up to faster moving targets, and into the fifty-caliber machine gun type.

There was quite a drive on in the city of Las Vegas for B-B guns and .22 rifles and skeet guns. And the citizens of the city of Las Vegas provided most of the guns that were used in the early training of the students. Of course, after the base got going out there, appropriations were made to take care of such equipment, but it was quite a crash program, because they needed gunners for the airplanes flying over Germany. And they had to get under way, and this was the only way that they could do it.

The skeet guns were used by the students who were loaded into trucks and driven past a still target, so that they could practice on their firing, simulating a moving target. However, the target was stationary, and the vehicle was moving. But it turned out to be quite a training gimmick. And the entire operation—

early operation—of the gunnery school out there was one of innovation.

Harvey Huglin, who was the gunnery training officer and a West Point graduate in engineering, was the main moving force in developing all of these training gadgets that they had at the base. One of the things that he did was to set up a small railroad in the open spaces to the west of the gunnery school, which was a flat railroad track upon which a moving target was placed and ran around the track in circles. The railroad engineers said that he'd never make it because the turns were too sharp, not banked, and so forth, but he made the thing work when everybody said it just wouldn't work. The students would be stationed along the track, and as the railroad car that was the target went around the track, they would fire with the machine gun bullets, and this was another simulated moving target.

Then, in the later, oh, the later days of the war, they built out on the western edge of the base a covey of B-29's—simulated, of course, in wood. And it was a formation of four B-29's, simulated, and a small airplane would fly around in between the simulated airplanes—the B-29's—and the gunnery students would fire camera "bullets" at the small Piper Cub airplane, and their score kept as a result of the pictures that were taken and hits that were made on the Piper Cub. While it was not as satisfactory as the later training which developed in air-to-air combat with pictures, camera, and guns, it was about as satisfactory as you could find for training in those early days.

At the time they were flying P-38's over at the air base, and everybody thought that that was the latest thing and the last development of the airplane. They were the fastest and most easily maneuverable, and the fliers who flew them said that they were the hottest things in the air. Well, of course, now you've got your

jets that're doing mach two and coming up to mach three, and they think nothing about it.

And thinking back, Huglin and some of the rest of the pilots at the air base used to talk about how they were going to break the barrier of sound and what would happen when they did. We, today, know that there is no problem, that they just go through barrier of sound and have a sonic boom, and that's it. But in those days, there were very many schools of thought as to what would happen when they broke the sound barrier. One of 'em was that it would be just like running into a brick wall and they didn't know whether they could ever get through it. Huglin always maintained that there would be no problem, and that it would develop just the way it has. Others said that when they were going through the sound barrier, the plane probably would shake itself to pieces, and the pilot would have to come down in a parachute. I think that Huglin probably knew more about it than anybody else and did predict that the way it is now was what would happen.

## HENDERSON AND BMI

At about the same time that the training for the air base was going on, it became necessary to find some place for the production of magnesium for incendiary bombs for the conduct of the war in Germany. The plant in England, which had been supplying most of the magnesium to the governments, was under constant threat of bombing by the Germans, and it was necessary to attempt to find some place in the United States to develop the magnesium. There were several sites under consideration, but the most logical one seemed to be out on the flats between Las Vegas and Boulder City. Howard Eells, who was the head of the Basic Refractories in Cleveland, Ohio, had some ore deposits

around Gabbs, which he was certain could be used for the manufacture of magnesium. And he got the contract for development of the magnesium plant. He decided on the site at what now is Henderson.

And it was quite interesting that the plant at Henderson, as it stands now, was copied from the plant in England. Blueprints of the plant in England were dispatched to the United States—one set of plans by submarine, one by boat, and one by airplane, so that it was certain that one of the three vehicles would bring the plans safely to the United States. It's quite interesting that two of the three plans got to the United States—the one by the submarine and the one by the airplane, but the plans that were carried by boat are somewhere down in the bottom of the Atlantic now. The boat was sunk by a German submarine.

But the plant was started out at Henderson about 1940. At the time the Basic Magnesium plant needed a great deal of water. So the federal government built a water line from Lake Mead to Henderson and the plant. At the time, the plant was using only so much water—I've forgotten the gallonage, acre feet, or whatever it was. But my brother, who was then on the Colorado River Commission, and Mr. Eells got together. And they came up with a plan that, if they were going to build the pipeline from the lake to the Basic plant, that they might as well build it large enough so that in the future if the Las Vegas Valley needed water, the pipeline from the lake to the plant would be available and that the company that would be supplying the Las Vegas Valley with water would be able to tap on to the line at Henderson. This proved to be quite a visionary step, because at the present time, or just after the War, it was apparent that the underground water that was serving Las Vegas was not going to be sufficient for the growth of the population, and that it was

necessary to hook on to the line. And the city of Las Vegas, or the Las Vegas Valley, did not have to pay for the pumping facilities out of the lake into the Henderson line, and the line was large enough to take care of the immediate needs of a growing Las Vegas. All that the valley had to do was to pay for the line from Henderson into the Las Vegas Valley.

Well, they were building the plant at Henderson. The McNeil Construction Company from Los Angeles, headed by Lawrence G. McNeil, won the contract for construction of the plant. They'd gotten about two-thirds finished with the administration building, which was the heart of the plant itself, and necessary for the operation of the plant, when a fire broke out and destroyed the entire constructed part of the office building.

It was very complicated at that time. A telephone switchboard was in the plant and was also destroyed by fire and it was quite a tragedy because during the War, there weren't very many of those switchboards available. And this one had been made especially for the Basic Magnesium plant, and it was destroyed by fire. However, as the McNeil Construction Company moved in—the embers were not even cooled yet, but they moved in—with their bulldozers and everything and cleared the debris away in a twenty-four-hour working day, and then started rebuilding the administration building. They worked twenty-four hours a day, around the clock, to reconstruct the building. At the same time, the government was looking for a new switchboard to take care of the telephone exchange in the administration building. The reason that the switchboard was of such great import was the fact that the seat of government in Washington had to be kept in contact with the local plant to determine the orders, and so forth, that were necessary to get the magnesium for the bouts.

The McNeil Construction Company set all kinds of construction records during the rebuilding of the administration building. And when it was dedicated, it was only about three weeks late, which was quite an accomplishment in construction work. Three weeks after the original scheduled finishing date, the new building was up and dedicated.

Many of the local people were employed at the Basic plant. One of the reasons for the increase in the Negro population in the city of Las Vegas was that the federal government officials, having heard of the heat situation in Las Vegas during the summertime, were convinced that the white people couldn't stand working in the Basic Magnesium plant, and many colored people were recruited for jobs in the plant. It's a little hard to understand how the federal government figured the people of the city of Las Vegas had lived in the area from 1905 until 1940 and seemed to have no trouble, but that's the way they figured. They brought in the Negroes, mostly from around the Tallulah, Alabama area. From a population of about a hundred and fifty, the Negro group grew to around two thousand. And as the Negroes came here and worked, they sent back for other members of their family, because Las Vegas was, they figured, such a nice place to live—as have the majority of other people who came here to make their home. And as a result, there has been a steady increase of the Negro population, along with a steady increase of the white population in Las Vegas.

After the war was ended, or the German part of the war was ended, there became less and less need for the magnesium. And as a result, the operation was phased out. And the General Services Administration was given orders to cannibalize the plant—sell it to the highest bidder for junk.

However, John Mueller and my brother, A. E. Cahlan, who were on the Colorado River Commission at the time, decided that this would be a very fine deal if the state of Nevada could purchase the property from the federal government and turn it into a chemical plant. This was negotiated through the efforts of Pat McCarran, mainly, and the plant was sold to the state of Nevada for one dollar. Governor Vail Pittman and Lieutenant Governor Clifford A. Jones also played an important part in the negotiations for the purchase of the plant by the state. The estimated value of the plant would be paid off when, as, and if the state of Nevada got lessees for the various plant areas. As a result of negotiations by Mueller and Mr. Henderson, who was then connected with the GSA and after whom the city of Henderson was named, [we] attracted seven of the better chemical outfits in the United States to come in and take over the property. This was based on a very favorable electrical rate out of Boulder Dam—Nevada's allocation for Boulder Dam power, which up to that time, had not been used to any great degree—and also a favorable water contract. And as a result, we had the birth of a new community which has been growing and prospering ever since.

#### THE AEC

And another phase of the life in the city of Las Vegas was when the Atomic Energy Commission started to set off its atomic devices in this area in 1952. And here again the *Review-Journal* played a large part in preparing the people of the city of Las Vegas for this atomic experimentation at the then Frenchman's Flat. The Atomic Energy Commission, and mainly through Dick Elliott, who was the public relations man for

the Atomic Energy Commission, set up a meeting with all of the news people. At that time, we had a couple of TV stations. We had a meeting down at El Cortez Hotel, at which time members of the Atomic Energy outfit were here, along with Army and Navy officials—everybody that knew anything about the Atomic Energy program—and they outlined to the community, or to the press of the community—the information media—what was expected, and the results of the radiation. They said at the time that there would be, naturally, some radiation and that it would not come into any populated areas. This was the reason that they had chosen Frenchman's Flat—because the prevailing winds were from the south, and the radiation would be carried over unpopulated areas. They explained the reason for the atomic energy development, and pleaded with us to make the people of the city of Las Vegas cognizant of what was going on and the lack of danger that they could pledge to the people of Las Vegas.

So as a result, we ran a series of articles that they were going to explode these devices here, that there would be radiation, but it wouldn't be any worse than—if it did come to Las Vegas—it wouldn't be any worse than taking an x-ray treatment. It was mostly because of the unknown that the people were at least a little reticent to accept the Atomic Energy Commission project. However, we played on the role that patriotism played in this thing, and that this was going to unlock new eras—as it has for the people of the United States, we conditioned the local people for the explosions that were to follow.

The first device was set off in the greatest of secrecy. Nobody knew when it was going to be, or really what effect it would have. The AEC took every precaution that they could to

allow the governor of the state of Nevada, who at that time was Charlie Russell, to announce that the atomic bomb had been set off.

Unfortunately, however, the Atomic Energy Commission could not control traffic, which was very heavy from Los Angeles over to here, and a truckdriver saw the explosion as he was coming down the hill toward Stateline out south of Las Vegas, and he got into Jean, and very nicely called the *Review-Journal*, and we got an eye-witness account of the blast and what it looked like from afar. And we put out an extra, and about two or three hours later, Russell announced that the first atomic bomb had been set off in the state of Nevada at Frenchman's Flat. So we were about two hours ahead of the official announcement.

Of course, I don't know how they could hide the thing because the intense light that it spreads was seen from as far off as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and these areas. However, they were very secretive.

At one time, along about the second or third blast, we had FBI people in here, investigating me and my news staff, because they wanted to find out where the leak was—that we knew that the atomic device was going to be set off. Well, it was very simple. These scientists would all of a sudden start flying in to Las Vegas from Alamogordo or Albuquerque, and there would be a great deal of activity at both Nellis Air Force Base and Indian Springs. And the scientists would be billeted at the Hotel Last Frontier and would leave calls for two o'clock in the morning. Well, when ten or fifteen scientists leave calls for two o'clock in the morning, then something's going to happen. So when the FBI came in, I just told 'em it was very simple, that, we've got a bellhop out at the Last Frontier that calls us and says there have been calls left for two or three in the morning—or two o'clock

in the morning—you can make the best of it. So we were able to pinpoint the shots, at least the day that they were set off. We never could pinpoint the hour, because a lot of times, the weather conditions postpone it—sometimes they postponed it as much as a day or two.

I can remember that half the city of Las Vegas would get up in the morning and go out on the flat above the valley out there, to watch the blasts go off and had a very good view of them. You couldn't see the blasts themselves, but you could see the effect, and you could see the mushroom cloud, and so forth, so the first three or four became quite interesting for the atom bomb watchers. And after that, nobody paid any attention to them. The people in the casinos would be gambling and so forth, and they'd see the big flash of light, and they'd say, "Well, there goes another one," and go back to their crap games, and so forth.

One of the most interesting atomic devices set off out there was known as Operation Doorstep. And this was the explosion that was carried on the TV into the living rooms in practically the entire United States. And this was the start of the television programs coming into Las Vegas from Los Angeles, because before that time, there was no way that they could get television in here because the programs developed in Los Angeles, and they had no way of getting them here. They did come up—I believe one network did come through the repeater station out here and conducted those programs.

There's a fellow in Los Angeles—had a German name, and I have forgotten what it is right now, I think Kurt was his first name—but anyway, he got the idea of putting repeaters—repeater towers. I think there are three between here and Los Angeles. One is up on Charleston Mountain, there's another one out on Mountain Pass, and another one down at Halloran Wells that took the impulse

down to Los Angeles. And they built these three towers on the mountains, and all of the equipment that was brought in was brought in by helicopter and dropped on the top of the mountains. Then the crews climbed up to the top of the mountains and put them together. I think it was about a six months' proposition. This was how they did the job when they set off this Operation Doorstep device. And after that, the towers were maintained and now are being used—either them, or similar ones are being used—to get a lot of the programs in here from Los Angeles.

And very fortunately, I was able to attend this session, and it is the eeriest thing that anybody can imagine. When we left Las Vegas about two-thirty in the morning, it was in the spring, as I recall it, and it was cold as the dickens. We were all wrapped up in—well, the fact of the matter is, I had on a ski suit to go up there. And as the sun came up above the mountains and it started in to warm up, you could just see the fellows peeling off their clothes in order to get a little cool.

This was the experiment that was to determine how the atomic blast reacted on various types of houses and what happened on the inside of the houses, and so forth and so on. And it was a part of the Civil Defense operation, and all of the Civil Defense people from all over the United States were here for that thing. And then the Marines were here. It was another maneuver to see how the Marines would react and what could be done in the event of atomic war. So it was quite a group out there in the—out at Frenchman's Flat.

And they only had a certain number of lead glasses. You had to look through this heavily-leaded glass so that your eyes wouldn't be damaged with the brightness of the atomic blast. And everybody who didn't get a pair of those glasses was warned to turn their back on

the blast and close their eyes. And as I say, I was fortunate enough to pick up a pair of the leaded glasses and I certainly was very glad that I did. Because I saw the whole operation from the time that the first flash went off until all of the color of the explosion disappeared into the atomic cloud.

It is the most awesome thing that I have ever seen. The device is exploded, and you see this terrific flash of white light, and then there is a roiling purple ball that the smoke just seems to roil around the ball, and as the ball grows bigger, it turns into all colors of the rainbow, and then all of a sudden, the sound of the shock wave'd hit you, and it's just as if somebody took a bat and hit you in the stomach. It's just that potent. It could very easily knock a man over if he weren't expecting it. And all the time, this roiling, boiling cloud—or fireball—is rising in the air and picking up the dirt of the ground. It seems to suck the dirt from the ground into the stem of the mushroom, and very definitely, the cloud is in the form of a mushroom and just maintains that until it gets up into the air—or into the wind—and then is dissipated. But if there is any color in the rainbow that is not in that atomic explosion, I can't recall because I saw 'em all. The overall and the most awesome thing is the red fire, because it looks like the fires that Dante describes in his Inferno. And certainly, Dante must have had this in mind, because it is the most awesome thing I have ever seen. It's too bad that these people can't see the atomic explosion—these people that are thinking about starting a war—because if they'd ever see that, they'd back off in a hurry.

We, of course, maintained coverage of the atomic energy blasts as long as there was any interest in it, but after the Operation Doorstep, and everybody in the basin had

seen it and were able to see it on television, much of the interest died, simply because the people saw that it wasn't—it was no longer something unknown. They had seen the blast, and they had survived, their television sets didn't blow up as a result of the explosion, and so forth, and a lot of the terror of the unknown was removed. Now, of course, now some of it is going underground—or, all of it is going underground, and there is no fear any more.

It's my understanding—I have kept fairly well in touch with the Atomic Energy Commission and their operation in the state of Nevada to know—that they are doing some very fantastic things. The last operation that they set off was to see what could be done toward digging a trench with atomic power. They tell me that the operation was a huge success, that it did exactly what the scientists said it would do, and there is every possibility that they'll be able to dig canals and build harbors, and so forth and so on with atomic energy, and revitalize or recharge the entire world.

## SPORTS INTERESTS

I mentioned being an avid sports fan. Looking back over my history in Reno and Las Vegas, I can recall real well one of my big heroes—big athletic hero—that I met was a guy by the name of Frank "Ping" Bodie, who played baseball for the Chicago White Sox. The Chicago White Sox used to come through Reno. They trained in California in their spring training and held exhibition games all the way back to Chicago until the start of the season. And I can recall, Moana Springs—standing outside the baseball field there, and this big, tubby, fat guy coming up to me and saying, "Well, look, aren't you comin' in to see the ball game?"

And I said, "No, I haven't got any money. I can't go in."

So he said, "Well, you stand outside the center field fence out there when the ball game starts, and I'll knock the ball over the fence, and you can come in on the baseball."

So I stationed myself out near the center field fence, and sure enough, Bodie came up; he knocked one over the fence, and I took it around the front entrance, and they let me in. So that's how I saw my first big league baseball game—through the compliments of one Ping Bodie.

And I can recall, also, when I was in the Richmond area and working for Standard Oil one fall, I became a member of a semipro ball club down there, out of Richmond, and we were playing ball games all out of the area. And one Sunday, we went up to Rodeo, California, and the guy who was pitching for Rodeo was a high school kid by the name of "Lefty" Gomez, who later went to the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific Coast League, and later than that, went to the New York Yankees and became one of the big stars of the New York Yankees. And it is a very fine boast of mine that I faced Lefty Gomez in one baseball game and got three hits out of four times at bat, which was about a .750 percentage. And that isn't bad for getting hits off the star of the New York Yankees! Of course, the thing is, he was in high school at the time, but it still was Lefty Gomez.

And one of the earliest opportunities that I had to meet Jack Kramer, the former tennis great, amateur and professional, was here in Las Vegas. When I came down from Reno to live and work in Las Vegas, there wasn't very much to do athletic-wise in the summertime, because it was so darn hot that nobody played baseball—or, they did play baseball, but I didn't participate because of the heat. But in the evening it cooled off quite a bit, and

there were some lighted tennis courts over on the Union Pacific grounds about where the Greyhound depot is now. And it was operated by the Union Pacific Employees Athletic Association. And that was about all there was to do at night in Las Vegas. So we used to go over and play tennis, and Jack Kramer, at that time, was probably a, oh, ten-year-old or eleven-year-old and his father, Dave Kramer, was quite a tennis player himself. He had taught Jack to play tennis, and we used to play doubles and singles with Jack Kramer. And then they moved to California, and Dave gave Jack the benefit of the best tennis instructors in that area, and he went on to become a Wimbledon favorite and amateur tennis star, and then later promoted professional tennis. The tennis troop he had toured the world. But Jack Kramer was a native-born Las Vegan, and if you ever see him and ask him about it, he'll tell you about how he learned to play tennis in Las Vegas.

I can always remember Buck Shaw, who was a football coach at the University of Nevada and later on became the football coach of the San Francisco Forty-Niners and later the Philadelphia Eagles. Buck originally came to the University of Nevada from Notre Dame. "Corky" Courtwright was the coach at the University, and he brought Buck in as the line coach. Buck was right out of Notre Dame, and I guess he was, oh, twenty-one, twenty-two years old. I was a freshman, I guess. So, we used to—Buck and I used to—be very good friends. And then he went back to North Carolina and later came back to Nevada as head coach when I was a junior, and stayed there during my senior year, and we became very, very well acquainted. We would go out to dinner together, his wife and my wife. Marge Shaw was a very charming girl. I have maintained my interest or my acquaintanceship with Buck for all these

years. I think he's now in California in the Bay area and has retired from coaching.

I was at the Shrine football game down in San Francisco the afternoon that Buck was fired by Tony Morabito of the San Francisco Forty-Niners. I was sitting in the press box with some of my very good friends of the United Press Association office in San Francisco. Well, Buck and Marge walked by, and I stopped them and spoke, and we had several minutes of conversation. In between halves, we went back into the coffee room—refreshment room—and Morabito was there. And he announced to the press in the half time that he had fired Buck Shaw as the football coach of the Forty-Niners. It was over the public address system, and Buck and Marge got up and walked out of the stadium, and I didn't see them for four or five years after that. But he told me the story about Morabito firing him, and, it was really something. Because, to see a man cut down that way, with no notice whatever, it was real bad.

I became very well acquainted with Jack Dempsey. The first time I met him was in Reno, when he was promoting the Max Baer-Paulino Uzcudum fight there in Reno. He was a promoter, although his associate—I'll think of his name—was the actual promoter. Jack was the front man, and would be the referee.

So I went up to cover the fight for the *Review-Journal*. Being around the training camps of the two people and into the office of the fight promoter, I became acquainted with Dempsey then. The next year, I went up for the Baer—"Kingfish" Levinsky fight, which was also promoted by Dempsey, and became very well acquainted with Jack on those two occasions. And this has maintained through the years.

Jack Dempsey's manager at that time was a man by the name of Leonard Sacks, and as I say, I became very well acquainted with both

of them during the time that I was in Reno. Following those fights, Sacks and Dempsey went down to Mexico and then came back through Las Vegas.

It so happened that the night that Dempsey was here, they were having a fight card at the Legion Arena, and on the fight card were two local fighters by the name of "Poison" Smith and Joe Morales. Dempsey was quite interested in the two of them and thought they were pretty good fighters, so he asked me if I could get them under contract for him, and I told him I thought I could; I'd see what I could do.

So I got the two of them under contract to Dempsey. And he ordered the kids down to southern California for further training. Poison Smith was a great big Negro boy about six feet two and had very long arms and a very small head, and when he got his arms up in front of his head, nobody could get through to him. He was a very good fighter but didn't have any killer instinct. He went down to Los Angeles and went under the wing down there of one of the promoters in that area and got several fights and did very well until he ran up against "Hank" Hankensen, who at that time was quite a Swedish fighter down around the Los Angeles area. And Poison had Hankensen on the deck two or three times during the first couple of rounds, but didn't move in to knock him out, and finally, Hankensen knocked Smith out. And the Dempsey representative under whose wing Smith was fighting, said that this—he just didn't have it, and was shipping him back. So Poison Smith came back here, and the last I heard of him, he was driving a garbage truck in the city of Las Vegas, but he's still around. Here was a kid that had a real good chance, and with Dempsey's backing probably could've gone somewhere if he had only had the heart to fight.

Joe Morales was quite a different type kid. He was a little Mexican boy, weighed around a hundred and twenty-five or a hundred and thirty pounds, and a real good fighter. The fella in Los Angeles who trained him said that they could've made him the featherweight titleholder—featherweight champion—within two or three years. He was that good. But unfortunately, the World War broke out, and he enlisted in the Army, and Joe now is over on Anzio Beach under a cross. He was killed in the invasion of Anzio, during World War II.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON POPULATION GROWTH

I want to speak for a few minutes about the sudden growth of our community and summarize some of the causes for the growth. As most of the people know, North Las Vegas is about the fourth largest community in the state of Nevada. And this growth has come since 1939-40. When I first came to Las Vegas in 1929, North Las Vegas was just known as a flat place at the bottom of a hill. One of its more potent attractions was Nell "Ma" Glancy's place down there. "Ma" Glancy was a very good brewer of home brew beer, and her place attracted very many people from the city of Las Vegas to partake of the brew she made. I can well remember Frank McNamee, the late supreme court judge, and myself going down to Ma Glancy's on a Saturday afternoon and listening to a radio broadcast of Stanford football games, mainly because we couldn't get the football games in Las Vegas because of the interference in the radio, and there was no interference in North Las Vegas. So we combined beer and football on Saturday afternoon at Ma Glancy's. That just gives you an indication of what North Las Vegas was during the building of Boulder Dam right down at the bottom of the hill. And South

Main Street—where we call "five points," it's where Las Vegas Boulevard North and North Main Street run in together and continue on as the Salt Lake Highway—was the site of Hooverville, the poverty area of Las Vegas during the construction of Boulder Dam.

At that time, the land in Las Vegas was selling from anywhere from five hundred to a thousand dollars for a twenty-five-foot lot. And the lots in North Las Vegas were priced anywhere from fifty dollars to two hundred and fifty dollars. So as a result, a lot of people who couldn't afford the lots in Las Vegas moved to North Las Vegas and the town just grew like Topsy. It was not an incorporated town and was under the jurisdiction of the county commissioners and a town board. But nobody paid any attention—in Las Vegas—nobody paid any attention to North Las Vegas, and it just grew and grew. And that's one of the tragedies of a lack of foresight on the part of some of the politicians. At the time it was growing, it was not annexed by the city of Las Vegas. You have the same situation here between Las Vegas and North Las Vegas that you have between Reno and Sparks. There is no definite line of division between the two of them. They might just as well be operated by one government to save everybody a lot of money. But it wasn't done, and that's the answer.

In 1940, when Nellis Air Force Base was established as the Las Vegas Aerial Gunnery School, more houses started to spring up. I've forgotten the year it was incorporated, but it hasn't been too long—when it was incorporated—and even then, it didn't appear to be any great amount of competition to Las Vegas until a guy by the name of Clay Lynch was made city manager down there. And Clay Lynch has lit a fire under those guys down there in North Las Vegas, and they are really going to town as far as trying to attract

new businesses and new industry and new residents into the area. While the community is a community of, oh, middle-class houses—I don't say that in a derogatory way at all, it's still—it's one of the areas where you can get houses within the income of the middleclass people. And naturally, they are going to go where they can get the most for their money. North Las Vegas has expanded. Howard Hughes has bought the North Las Vegas airport, and North Las Vegas is expecting great things from him as far as industrial development is concerned.

I think in the ordinary course of events, North Las Vegas and Las Vegas are going to become one. And I am sure that you're going to find that Las Vegas will annex the Strip area in the coming years. This should have been done, too, when there were not so many places out there. But nobody knew it was going to grow so much, and unfortunately, this is where all, or a great deal, of the tax revenue generates—from the Strip area—and none of that money goes into the coffers of the city of Las Vegas.

Winchester and Paradise townships out there are probably two of the richest townships in the whole United States. They are in the county, and don't pay any city taxes, and it necessitates the hiring of county firemen to protect the big investment that is on the Strip; it's a duplication of effort; the city department could do the same job for them, probably at a cheaper rate. The same way with the police protection. The sheriff's department has to supply the Strip area with police protection. And as a result, the cost of the law enforcement and fire prevention in the Las Vegas area, including the Strip and North Las Vegas is, of course, three times what it should be, if one entity were operating the entire deal. I don't know that it's three times as much, but it's at least twice

as much. You can't figure those things by the fact that there are three entities where there could be one.

But I think that you're going to find that within the next ten years, there will be a megalopolis here which will extend from south of Nellis Air Force Base to at least Sunset Road, and from the base of the mountains, Red Rock Mountains out here, to at least as far as Whitney, or East Las Vegas, and probably to Henderson. If we're going to have a million people in this valley, we're going to have to expand the boundaries, and it looks to me that it's going to go all four ways. So that is the problem that we have in Las Vegas in the future. But we're going to have to think about this megalopolis and prepare for it.

How do I explain the current overbuilding in North Las Vegas? I don't know that there is any. There was a great overbuilding in the city of Las Vegas, and that was caused mainly by the greed of lending institutions. Money was very cheap. Four or five years ago, you could get money to build most anything, and all of the savings and loans and some of the banks had money that they could loan out, and they would lend the money to almost anybody who came in here. A lot of these people who came in here as contractors would get property in the city of Las Vegas and start a subdivision and borrow 150 percent of what the subdivision was going to cost them and pocket the 50 percent extra and go ahead and build the houses and build them as cheaply as possible and then subdivide one area and then move out, so that when the houses started in falling down, nobody'd catch 'em. And this is what happened, that money was so cheap, and everybody wanted to get into the construction business.

I might give you a concrete story of what happened during the building boom: There

was a young kid here whom I knew very well, who got his start by peddling pots and pans and going to the homes of people to cook their meals so that he could demonstrate those pots and pans. He was very successful and worked his way through college and came back to Las Vegas became a schoolteacher and was continuing his sale of pots and pans and making himself a very fine living. In fact, he made himself enough money to build an apartment house here. And he built the apartment house, and, oh, it was during the time when everybody was standing in line for apartments, and he said, "How long has this been going on?" So he decided he would become a building contractor. Well, now, he had as much business being a building contractor as I have becoming an astronaut, because he didn't know the first details about building or the value of the land, and so forth and so on. He just kept getting himself in deeper and deeper. The first two or three apartment houses that he built sold, and he did very well. Then, suddenly the town was overbuilt and the economy started to get slowed down, and he was out on a limb. But all this money had been borrowed, and he not only went broke himself, but he pulled down his mother and father, who had quite a lot of money. He just hit the bottom. He's back, again, now, teaching school and selling pots and pans and he's going to pay these debts off; I don't think there's any doubt about it because he's that kind of a guy. But this just shows you who was going into the building business in the city of Las Vegas—people who didn't know any more about it than I do. And the financial institutions were overlending, and as a result, there was overbuilding everywhere, and perhaps, overbuilding in North Las Vegas.

And we're just coming out of it in 1968. We're just where, as President Johnson says, "We can see the light at the end of the tunnel."

And I don't think there's any doubt in the world that all these homes and apartment houses that the savings and loan companies have been forced to foreclose on will all be sold; they'll have to take a loss on 'em, but they're going to realize some money on 'em, except those that have been damaged completely by vandals.

But I think that it was a good thing, because, fortunately, none of the savings and loans, or any of the financial institutions here went down the drain. There was a lot of swapping going on around the various financial institutions that nobody knew about that probably saved two or three of them from going under. Had one of them gone under, it would have been a real panic down here because the—one of the larger savings and loans was just on the verge of going broke, and the other financial institutions pulled them out of it, and they're coming along all right now. And I don't think there's any doubt in the world but what you've got the future of Las Vegas assured. I can't see anything but future. You've got a situation that everybody says you can't make any money in the city of Las Vegas on land any more. I'd like to say to them that as far as that's concerned, you've got the same opportunities I had when I came down here in 1929. The only thing is, it costs you more money to get in. It's a bigger poker game and that's the answer.

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## SOUTHERN NEVADA CIVIC AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Of course, there wasn't anything that was done in the community that either my brother or myself or Florence, and later, Jim Down, who became advertising manager of the *Review-Journal* in 1932 or '33, weren't active in. My brother was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, as were Florence and myself.

About 1935, there was a fellow over in Beckley's shoe store, which was on the corner of First and Fremont Street on the southwest corner, where the Pioneer Club is now; a fellow by the name of Bill Stenwick, who had come here from California, and had been active in the Junior Chamber of Commerce work down there. Jimmy Down was calling on him for advertising from the store. He was more or less the advertising man for Bill Beckley, and Jimmy used to call on him every day, and they got to talking about the Junior Chamber of Commerce movement, and Jimmy came over and talked to me, and I thought it was a good idea. So we got several of the young people of Las Vegas together, and formed the local chapter of the Junior Chamber of Commerce. At that time, the

senior Chamber of Commerce was composed of both men and women. So we went ahead and formed the charter membership with the women present, and among them were Florence Lee Jones, now my wife; Sonya Worthy, now Mrs. Earl Honrath; Dalton Buck, now Mrs. Eric Jamieson; Ellen Ainnerty, now Mrs. George Albright, and several other women. And we received our charter in 1935.

Shortly after we received the charter, we took on the job of hosting a regional convention of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in Las Vegas. The region consisted of San Diego, Los Angeles, as far up as Santa Barbara, and a lot of the smaller communities around Los Angeles, and all together, the delegate membership who would come to the convention would amount to from eighty to a hundred. So we decided we would attempt to get the regional convention up here.

The convention that year was in San Diego, so about ten or twelve of us went down to San Diego and made a bid for the convention. And during the bid for the convention, we had a hospitality suite in the

U. S. Grant Hotel down there, and we invited all of the delegates at the convention to come to the suite sometime. We had entertainment, including the stripteasers. We had a model of Boulder Dam that had been built by George Albright and Jack Albright and had that on display out in front of the hotel. And so when we made our bid for the convention in San Diego, everybody else withdrew, and we got it!

And then we didn't know what to do with it, because in Las Vegas, at that time, there were big hotels—the Nevada Hotel which now is the Sal Sagev, and the Apache Hotel. They were in the course of expanding the Sal Sagev (Las Vegas spelled backward), and I think there were about thirty rooms in the hotel. And as we had to take care of somewhere around eighty to ninety delegates, we didn't know where we were going to put 'em. But as it turned out, the entire community of Las Vegas was very, very fine. They all opened up the extra bedrooms that they had for us when we called around to the various homes in the community.

Another thing that we had problems with was no place to feed these people. There were no great eating places in the city of Las Vegas at the time. Probably the one that could feed the most people was the Union Pacific dining hall, which could seat about forty or fifty people. And that was it! And we had to have around, oh, two or three hundred, including the local people who would have to be served at the banquet. So they had just finished the War Memorial Building, which is now the Las Vegas City Hall. Robert J. "Bob" Kaltenborn, who was an associate member of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, said that he would see that they got food to the building over there. I didn't know how he was going to do it, but he did get some restaurants here in town to cook the food. And he transported it over

there by truck. Some of the Junior Chamber of Commerce members' wives and some of the local citizens served as waitresses, and we got the dinner served and real well done and never had a complaint. All of the people from California said it was one of the best conventions that they ever had. And it was the *first* convention that was ever held in the city of Las Vegas, which goes to show you that the Junior Chamber of Commerce sowed the seed of the convention business that is being done now in Las Vegas.

Paul Ralli was the first president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce; then Frank McNamee was second; I was third. Shortly after I became president of the local organization, they established clubs in Reno and in Ely, and we held a state meeting in Reno, and I was elected first state president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, of which I am very proud.

But getting back to the Las Vegas era around 1935, the Dam was just completed and President Roosevelt had dedicated the Dam, and the people of the city of Las Vegas were certain that now that the Dam had been completed that the bottom would drop out of the community. So in looking around to attract people to the city, the Las Vegas lodge of Elks was approached by Mr. Clyde Zerby, who was a former carnival barker and a show promoter, who brought the idea with him to stage a hometown Wild Western celebration and to name it the "Helldorado." James "Jim" Cashman, Sr., was one of the wheels of the Elks lodge at that time, and one of the wheels of southern Nevada for that matter, and Frank Gusewelle was the leading Knight of the Elks lodge, and several others—Orrin Adcock was the Secretary. The trustees of the Elks lodge decided that this was a real fine vehicle for attracting attention to the city of Las Vegas and to have a lot of fun, incidentally.

So it was decided that the Elks lodge would sponsor the Helldorado. The original Helldorado had little similarity to the ones that are being staged now. Remember that the town was only about six thousand, seven thousand people. And Zerby outlined his plan or program for the Helldorado as everybody getting attired in the old Western costumes and holding a sort of a carnival, it would be called now, for entertainment. And one of the highlights of the party would be the reestablishment, or reenactment, of a golden wedding anniversary for somebody in the city of Las Vegas that had been married for fifty years. Las Vegas was only thirty years old at the time, and it was a little rough to find anybody, but they finally did find Mr. and Mrs. Peter Pauff, who were chosen King and Queen of the Helldorado celebration for 1935.

Oh, and I might say, during the first celebration—the first Helldorado celebration—the Pauff couple was remarried on their fiftieth wedding anniversary, and there was a crowd of about, oh, two thousand, three thousand people there to cheer them on.

It was decided to hold the affair down at Sixth and Fremont Street on a vacant lot. Sixth and Fremont Street now is occupied by the old Sears and Roebuck store, which was not there in 1935, naturally. It was a vacant area from, oh, Sixth Street clear down to Ladd's swimming pool, which was down around Tenth Street. And all of that property was vacant when you got past Fifth Street; there wasn't very much between there and the desert except some scattered homes out on the dam road. So the celebration was set at Sixth Street and Fremont, and a big tent was placed as the "Golden Gulch Saloon," and there were two or three other tents scattered around the lot, for girly-girly shows and different types of carnival acts.

And everybody in the city participated in the celebration. They even had a mock trial in the county courthouse. The judge (there was only one then) and all the attorneys and everybody else dressed in western costumes, and they held a trial, found a horse thief guilty, and ordered him to be hanged, and he was to be hanged (but they never carried out the sentence). And the mayor and his wife and all of the people dressed in Western costumes, many of which have been saved by local people from their grandparents or parents, and others were secured from costume houses for the movies in Los Angeles.

It started on a Thursday with an old timers' parade, and this included a lot of horse-drawn vehicles that were secured from Moapa and Virgin Valleys and around this area. It wasn't very much of a parade, but it did have a couple of bands and several horse-drawn vehicles, and started on Fremont and Main Streets and worked down Fremont to Sixth Street, where it disbanded and everybody went into the Helldorado grounds for the evening entertainment.

Friday afternoon, they had the school kids' parade—school old timers' parade—and this was directed by K. O. Knudsen, who at that time was the principal of the Fifth Street Grammar School, one of the two grammar schools in the city of Las Vegas. The other one was way over on the Westside. And that was the extent of the primary education in Las Vegas. And the kids in the two grammar schools turned out for the parade, and they also were allowed to go into the Helldorado Village. The village itself was, as I say, composed of one big barroom and dance floor, and some girly-girly shows, and stuff that was available in the '49's when the big Gold Rush was on.

Everybody had a real good time, and they decided that they would hold it again,

so it became an annual event. At that time, there was no beauty parade in the schedule of the Helldorado. That came the second year, when M. E. Ward, who owned the Mesquite Grocery Store, which stood on the southeast corner of First and Fremont Street, decided that they should have some beauty to enliven the Helldorado celebration. He put up a fifty-dollar prize for the winner of the beauty contest. And they decorated automobiles to carry the girls down the street in the beauty contest, which was again held in the Helldorado Village grounds at Sixth and Fremont Street. The name of the girl that won, has been lost in the lack of archives, as far as the Elks lodge is concerned, and while it probably could be found, it would take a great deal of research because there was not too much coverage of the Helldorado at that time. The celebration followed the same format except that the beauty parade was put on on Sunday afternoon, and wound up at the same place as the others at Helldorado Village.

It was decided in the third year of the celebration that perhaps we had something—the Elks had something—that would be entertaining to people outside of the community, so it was decided to bring Bob Denton, who was the Union Pacific public relations man in Los Angeles, to Las Vegas to whip up some interest in the Helldorado celebration in Los Angeles. He came up with his assistant and we in the *Review-Journal* office and members of the Elks lodge helped him in promoting the Helldorado in Los Angeles.

It was about this time also—in fact it was this time also—that the Las Vegas Horsemen's Association, headed by Joe Ronnow, decided that a rodeo should be held in conjunction with the Helldorado celebration. So the Horsemen's Association got a rodeo contract stockman, who brought the stock, and

cowboys in to the city of Las Vegas. And the first rodeo was held in conjunction with the Helldorado the third year of its existence. The same format as previously (with the exception of three nights of rodeo) were held at Sixth and Fremont Street. The rodeo was held in the old city park, which now is part of the Squires Park, behind the post office building at the end of Third Street. There were already some bleachers there, where baseball was played in the summertime. The local horsemen built corrals and catch pens and the rodeo chutes at the city park area. And the first rodeo was held there. It's interesting to note that the Helldorado celebration is the only celebration that has gone through from its original inception in 1935 to the present day, without any interruption.

During the war period from 1941 to 1945, of course, all of the rodeos and western celebrations, in fact, all sorts of celebrations, were shut down because of the war and the fact that gas was rationed and all of these precautions were taken for the war effort. However, through the good offices of Senator Pat McCarran and the publicity that was given to Senator McCarran by myself and members of the Elks lodge, it was decided that the celebration in Las Vegas should be allowed to continue to provide entertainment for the war workers and the troops that were in this area.

You will recall, of course, that the air base was in operation then; Henderson was just about to go into operation, and they had the desert troops in this area around Needles and Searchlight and all of that section of the southern part of the state of Nevada. The desert troops of Patton were trained there. And we convinced the OPA that we should be able to hold the celebration and get gas coupons for the carnival people that would be brought in here to put on the show for the Helldorado.

And it was just about this time, also, that the Helldorado Village was constructed at Bonanza and North Fifth Street, which was done by the cooperation of the entire community. The dance hall, which was a large, bare building about two hundred feet long and about a hundred feet wide with a balcony around two sides—around the north and south sides—was built out of shake lumber. Robert B. "Bob" Griffith's late father, E. W. Griffith, had once operated a sawmill up in the Charleston Mountains, and the sawmill was put back into operation. Many of the trees in the Charleston Mountains, which were dead and could be cleared under the Forest Service regulations, were made into logs and brought down to Las Vegas through the generosity of the trucking interests who were in here at that time. They donated their truck to run from Charleston down to Las Vegas to bring the logs in. After the logs were brought in, the entire population of the city of Las Vegas assisted in building the dance hall and smaller buildings and fence. All of the carpenters—at that time there were very few unions in the city of Las Vegas, but there were a lot of artisans who were available—and they all joined with the other people to build the Helldorado Village.

As I say, the dance hall was the main building. And then on both sides of the frontier street there were little store-like buildings built, in which concessions were let to the local people—the firemen used to have a hamburger stand, and the VFW had a ring-pitching outfit, and some of the others had their fish pond, and it was just more or less of a hometown celebration there.

And then, in addition to that, the carnivals would come in and set up outside the Helldorado Village area, not around the Village itself, but in the general area. And as I say, during the war, we were very fortunate

in being able to keep the thing going. During the years of the war, the crowds on Fremont Street that watched the parades were very generously sprinkled with the uniforms of the Army, the Marines, the Air Force, and everybody had a real fine time, and it was well worth the government capitulation to our requests that we be allowed to run.

Shortly after the war was over and the Strip had been more built up with the addition of the Flamingo Hotel, the Sahara, and the Thunderbird, and the downtown areas—casino areas—the beauty parade became one of the outstanding affairs on the Pacific Coast. The hotels and casinos in Las Vegas would spend as much money on their floats to be entered in the parade as the people in the Tournament of Roses did on their January the first parade. It was—it became—such a fabulous deal that the regional networks of ABC and CBS came up and televised several of the parades to the West Coast audience. And, of course, that became—well, that aided in the publicity for the Helldorado and each year it would become greater and greater. And it has followed the same format throughout the years until the present time.

However, it's getting to be a real rough deal to get any horse-drawn vehicles into the parade of the old timers' parade, and it has developed into, now, a combination of old time vehicles—horse-drawn vehicles, and early vintage automobiles—which it probably will develop into in the years to come because, in the first place, you don't have the vehicles, and in the second place, there's no place around the country you can get horses to pull them. However, it has been suggested that the supplier of the stock for the rodeo might be able to get the horses and some horse-drawn vehicles in the future. If this will be done, nobody knows, but the Helldorado celebration has been

one of the real publicity generating events that has developed in the city of Las Vegas, and that was entirely through the complete cooperation of everybody in the community. And that's one thing that Las Vegas can pride itself on, is the fact that when a job had to be done that was good for the community, the general public pitched in and saw that it was carried through completely.

I might say, also in passing, that the Elks lodge probably has been one of the greatest influences for good in the city of Las Vegas. I don't say that because I am a member of the lodge and past officeholder—and I was Exalted Ruler in the local Elks lodge; I was also the state vice president, and I was District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler under the Grand Exalted Ruler, John E. Fenton. But I say it because it's true. Before I was a member of the Elks lodge—the Helldorado was built up and was fairly well going when I became a member of the Elks lodge.

And to show you the kind of cooperation, we used to have a public address system that would announce all of the entrants in the parades as they went by the corner of Second and Fremont Streets, I manned that public address system along with C. V. T. Gilbert, from the first Helldorado celebration until the twenty-fifth celebration, continuously. And I broke the continuity about 1961 for a couple of years and then went back in and announced the parades for another two or three years. Now, I have permanently retired in 1967—last year.

It was quite an added interest to the event because most of the people along the parade route never know who the entrants are or who they represent. So it was the feeling of the Elks lodge that they should be given the proper recognition, and as the largest crowd gathered at Second and Fremont Street—that's where the loudspeaker system was established. Later,

another one was placed at Fifth and Fremont, and Then later as the parade grew, they had them all along Fifth Street and along Fremont Street, so the crowds would be informed as to who The entrants were for the parade.

And we have had some very fine representation from all over The West Coast; usually the Long Beach Mounted Posse is the one that leads the parade. Of course, they're in The Tournament of Roses parade, and we have had as grand marshal of the parade people like "Death Valley Scotty," Rex Bell, who was the late lieutenant governor of the state of Nevada (this was before he was a resident of the state; he was in the movies in Los Angeles along with his wife, Clara Bow), and, oh, "Curly" Fletcher, Dick Foran, "Big Boy" Williams.

There was a deal in, I've forgotten what year it was, that Death Valley Scotty was to be the grand marshal of the parade and it was about The time that Roy Rogers and Dale Evans were making the movie "Eldorado" in Las Vegas. So the fact that Roy Rogers and Dale Evans were here, and that the studio that they were working for—I think it was Republic—had said that they would put in a real old time float in the parade if we would make Roy and Dale the marshals, the grand marshals, of the parade. Well, we'd already asked Scotty. And Scotty was such a publicity hound that when we went to him, and told him Roy Rogers and Dale Evans were here, and tried to explain to him that this was the making of a parade, and that he and Roy and Dale would be [a] real good combination for the parade, that they would be the grand marshal and he'd be the marshal of the second section of the parade, Scotty's famous statement was, "Scotty is the general marshal of the parade, or Scotty does not ride." Well, we finally started him out at the head of the procession, and we turned him off onto North Main Street and brought him

around by Carson Street and back into the parade on Fremont Street, and by the time he got into the parade, he was marshal of the second division! And he wasn't very happy about the thing, but he finally rode it out, but that was the last Helldorado celebration that he attended.

We did have, during the rodeo for a couple of years, a cowboy—or rancher—and Indian spectacle that had the Indians raiding a ranch house and burning the ranch house down, a script for which I wrote. And it was quite well received for two or three years, and then it got to be the cowboys who were in the rodeo had to get a little giggle juice before they went into their act, and as the act progressed, it got a little tough, and they got out of hand and burned something else besides the barn—or the little house that was supposed to be burned, so we had to cut that out. But as I say, over the years, this has been one of the big events of the year as far as Las Vegas is concerned.

During the time that the air base was in operation here, the rapport between the Army Air Force and the citizens of the city of Las Vegas was as high as any, anywhere in the United States. I well can remember one Christmas season, when at the height of the war—that was just after Pearl Harbor—and they were turning out cadets out at the air base out there—a class a month—and they were confined to the base during the entire month. They didn't get off the base except at the end of their training. So several of us—myself, Bob Griffith, and some of the members of the Chamber of Commerce—decided that it might be a good idea to put on a Christmas party for the cadets at the base. We contacted the commander, Colonel Martinus Stenseth, and he thought it would be a good idea also. And so it was set about to give this Christmas party.

There were about two thousand cadets at the base at the time, and you can figure out what a job it would be to feed two thousand people at a Christmas party. And we came up with the idea of getting the hotels in Las Vegas and eating places around the area to stage Christmas parties. One was at El Rancho Vegas, another was at the Last Frontier, both of which were in operation during the time that the air base was established here. Another one was at the Biltmore Hotel at the corner of North Main and Bonanza, which now is the Shamrock Furniture Store. And the other one was held at the Green Shack, which I have mentioned previously as one of the eating places of the city of Las Vegas that was quite popular at the time. Edward "Doc" Ladd, who was a chef—chief chef—at the Last Frontier, acted as Santa Claus, and he made visits to all four of the places, and a real big Christmas dinner was served at all of the four places. And it was quite a sight to see these kids, who were shoving off right after the first of the year for God knows where, in the Japanese theater or the South Pacific theater, and maybe come back and maybe not. I can well remember sitting at the—around the fireplace at the Last Frontier with these kids; sitting around the fireplace, singing "White Christmas" and watching tears flow down the cheeks of kids, knowing they were going out into the South Pacific and wondering whether they'd get back or not, which nobody knew. And it was the last celebration for a lot of these kids that left here for the war zone. It made quite an impression on me, and I think it would have made quite an impression on anybody who had seen it.

I recall, also, that I was out at El Rancho Vegas one night, around with some of the air base officers, and I met a general out there. We became very well acquainted, and I had very great respect for him, and we sat around

until three or four o'clock in the morning, drinking and eating. I left him at about four o'clock in the morning, and he shook hands with me and told me he was off for Hawaii in the next day or so, and that was the last time I saw him. And his name was General Tinker, who was one of the upper echelon of fliers in the Air Force. He went on to Hawaii, and on his first trip as a combat pilot, never got back to Hawaii. He was lost in action. I think I was the last civilian to see him in the city of Las Vegas. General Tinker was an Indian, and had quite a career in the Air Force, and Tinker Air Force Base, I think in Oklahoma, was named after him.

As regards the things that happened in the city of Las Vegas, one of the things that I am probably the most proud of was the fact that I assisted in bringing professional baseball to the city of Las Vegas. It was after the war, probably about 1946 or '47, and Les Powers, who was a baseball front office man in Los Angeles, and Newt Kimball came to Las Vegas with the idea of entering Las Vegas in the Sunset League, which was to be composed of some teams in southern California, Arizona, and Mexico. So we decided that we would enter a team in the league. We formed an association to put professional baseball in Las Vegas and named the team the "Las Vegas Wranglers," taken after the cattle wranglers of an earlier day. We set up a baseball park in the city park over behind the post office, because it had bleachers already up for Helldorado and had a pretty good playing field. So that's where we started playing baseball at the time.

And we had quite a good baseball club in the city of Las Vegas. The games were pretty well attended. During the first year that they were playing baseball in the city park, they used to have a short right field fence, and the Las Vegas Wranglers set a record for home runs during a season. I've forgotten how

many there were, but anyway, the ball that broke the record is back in the Baseball Hall of Fame, back in Cooperstown, with the record inscribed on it.

And after the first couple of seasons, at city park, Cashman Field was constructed down on North Main Street, and for two years, the Wranglers played there and had some real good ball clubs. However, the attendance fell off. (Reno was in that Sunset League, too.) But in the last couple of years, the attendance fell off and they had problems with their withholding tax, and that sort of stuff, and finally gave up as a professional baseball town. However, during the time that professional baseball was in Las Vegas, we provided entertainment for people during the summer, and we really had a lot of fun during the four or five years that the Wranglers were playing ball.

One of the phases of my career in Las Vegas which was very interesting, was the ten years that I served as Clark County juvenile officer from 1931 to 1941. I got this position when Francis Butcher, the athletic coach at the Las Vegas High School, and one of the big heroes of the entire community, was killed in a tragic fire. I assumed this position after his death and had some very interesting experiences. I did this juvenile work in addition to my job at the *Review-Journal* as news editor and sports editor.

In looking at the juvenile crime situation in the present day, it is quite apparent to me that the people who are handling the juvenile courts and the juvenile probation positions are not completely aware of the problems of young men. I had no problems with the juveniles of Las Vegas when I was juvenile officer, and I believe, I had the respect of the majority of the youngsters that I handled—at least those who are still around (and there are many who came under my supervision) have

thanked me many times for the understanding that I had of their problems.

I can well remember one instance where five of the very prominent local young men went to the high school graduation ceremonies and proceeded to break the windows in the high school gymnasium, and many windows and headlights of automobiles. They were caught and turned over to me for action. None of them had been in any trouble before, and as I say, they were the sons of very prominent people in the city of Las Vegas.

I decided that they needed a lesson. They were fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years old, and they needed a lesson that would remain with them the rest of their lives. So I went to the city court. Judge Frank McNamee was presiding on the bench at the time. And I told him the situation, and that I wanted to have these kids sentenced to ten days at hard labor as a result of their activities. Today, this probably would not be possible because there would have been attorneys that would have appealed the thing to the district court, probably to the state supreme court, and gone up to the federal supreme court and got a ruling that this was not according to law. However, at that time, there was no law that prevented what we did.

Judge McNamee sentenced the boys to ten days' hard labor. So I took them over to the Stockade, which was an honor farm, more or less, for people that had been sentenced to serve terms in the city jail, and had them isolated away from anybody else over there. They were all by themselves. And incidentally, the sentence that Judge McNamee meted out was that the boys were to be in custody during the daytime and could go home at night and stay home with their parents at night. I told their parents that they were to see that they remained home, which they did.

The "hard labor" that I gave to the boys was that they would saw mesquite wood with

a dull saw, and I told "Rosie" Ward, who was the boss of the Stockade over there, to see that the boys were out in the sunshine - this was about May — and not to let them get into the shade unless they started to keel over.

About three hours after they were serving their first stint on the saw and the mesquite wood (if anybody has tried to saw mesquite wood, they know it's even harder than mahogany, and with a dull saw, you're workin' all the time), about three hours after they started serving their first stint, I got a telephone call from one of the boys, saying, "Mr. Cahlan, will you come over to the Stockade?"

So I went over to the Stockade, and here all four of the boys were with their hands blistered and some of 'em bleeding. The spokesman for the crew said, "Mr. Cahlan, if you'll get us out of this thing, we promise you that we will never, never do anything to get in trouble again."

And I said, "Well, I'm sorry. There's only one thing that can be done to get this sentence changed. We're going to have to go to the state supreme court, and there's nothin' I can do about it." I said, "You're goin' to have to finish your term."

So they went back to work, and that afternoon about five o'clock I went over and asked them how they got along. They were, of course, all tired out and their hands were blistered. I guess it was cruel and inhuman treatment, but I sent them home, and they stayed home. The next morning when I got over to the Stockade, I asked them if they had learned the lesson that they should not do this sort of stuff again, and they said they sure did. And I said, "Well, all right, then. You can go on probation, but you're going to have to report to me for the next ten days, once a day for the next ten days, to serve out your sentence." And to this day, I have never had

any more problems with those kids at all. They have thanked me for teaching them a lesson. And so far as I know, they were never mixed up in any juvenile offenses after that.

This only goes to show that if you understand the problems of these kids and know what to do as a punishment for them—I think you can get by. The trouble is, in my opinion, as far as juveniles of this era are concerned—the present era—they've just had no supervision and no understanding. And naturally, kids get in trouble. I used to tell these kids who got in trouble and were sent to me, "You can't tell me anything about what you did, because I did the same thing when I was a kid that you're doing now. The only thing is, there were no juvenile officers then, and pranks are now considered law infractions, so I'm going to give you my experience so that maybe it will help you to stay out of trouble." And as I say, in all the time that I have lived here, even today, I see some of the kids that I had under my jurisdiction that are high in the legal field, and high in the medical field, and they always thank me for the time that I gave them to try to understand their problems.

I had another deal working for me until the parents got so mad that I had to back off from it. Every time a youngster was brought in to me for any active malicious mischief, I had what I call the paint gang. And every Saturday, these boys would report to me, and I would take them over to the police station and find out which curbs downtown needed painting. And I'd take the kids over there and they would have the supervision of a police officer to see that they worked, and they would paint the curbs. And you would be surprised as to what happened with these kids painting the curbs and their schoolmates coming around and seeing them paint those curbs., knowing that they were being punished.

And I never had any problems with these kids. It didn't hurt them at all—I mean, physically, it didn't hurt them. And of course, I guess as far as mental punishment was concerned, when the kids that weren't in trouble came around and started in hootin' 'em while they were painting the curb— I guess that did something to them. But certainly, I never had any problems with them after I got through with them.

The juvenile office certainly gave me an insight into psychological problems. I have seen kids that I have arrested—have been arrested—for stealing food, and turned over to me. I made an investigation of their home environment. One that I recall very well, the father would come home only every two or three months. When the kids would come home from school, they would find their mother lying on the bed drunk and not preparing any food or anything. And I couldn't criticize these kids for stealing when they were hungry. And we worked out deals that when these kids got hungry that they could go to a restaurant and get food, and it would be paid for by the county. And they—some of them who are still around—have thanked me a million times for what I did for them when they were growing up. But certainly this sort of stuff gives you a real good feeling, when you can look at youngsters that you have rehabilitated and they become good citizens—and by good citizens, I mean some of the leaders of the state and the community. If I started in naming some of the people that I handled when I was a juvenile officer, it'd knock your hat off.

I also had some failures. There was one young boy that I had problems with, and the worst—after a series of minor incidents—the worst thing that happened, he hit one of his close friends over the head. He hid in an automobile and waited for his friend, a service

station operator, to close the service station. Then he hit his friend and robbed him of the money.

Prior to this time, as I say, he had been in many, many problems, and every time I had tried to do anything with the kid, the mother, who was quite a political figure in the city of Las Vegas, always got him off. So this time, there wasn't anything to do except file charges against him and try to send him to Elko, to the juvenile school in Elko. So I filed charges and we had a hearing. And sure enough, the mother was there claiming that her boy never would do such a thing, and so forth and so on. She pleaded for one more chance, and if we'd let the boy go, she'd see that he joined the Navy.

Well, the judge was a very kindly man and knew the mother very well and had known the kid ever since he was born in the city of Las Vegas, so we decided we'd give him one more chance if he'd go into the Navy. Well, he just kept postponing going into the Navy, and postponing going into the Navy, and finally, he left Las Vegas and went to Fresno. And he and another kid stopped a motorist at a stop sign and shot him—killed the man and robbed him. The police caught the guys, the two boys, and sent them up to San Quentin, where they were sentenced to death in the gas chamber. And the mother still would not believe that her boy was that kind of a boy, and she passed a petition around in Las Vegas to send to the governor of the state of California, asking him to commute the sentence of the boy to life imprisonment. And she asked me to sign it, and when she asked me to sign it, I told her, I said, "You're the reason that this boy is in the death row up there. You have tried to get him out of all kinds of trouble," and I said, "You just—he went step after step, and each step he took was closer to the gas chamber, and it is your fault." And she began

to cry and beat me on the chest, and so forth and so on, but I never signed the petition. Incidentally, I never would have signed the petition anyway, because I'm not going to tell—I'm not going to be a party to telling a governor of a foreign state what he ought to do with some person like this. But he was executed in the gas chamber. That was one of the failures that we had, and there have been others, but as a general rule, kids are all right if you can get to them at the proper time.

The thing that I'm convinced about at the present time is that the parents or nobody else can get through to them. I always used to have the theory that if you could make a kid cry, you had—you had him beat. And every time that I talked to any of these youngsters, I gave them a real treatment, and when they'd start in bawlin', I'd know that I'd got through to them. It's a shame that people today can't realize this.

I can cite another instance. A kid here was arrested for stealing tires, and I had him down at the police station, and I gave him the treatment, the same as I was talking about. He started in bawling, and admitted to me that he'd stolen the tires. Well, I called his mother and father down to the police station, and in the absence of the youngster, I told the mother that the boy had been stealing tires, and it was something that we were going to have to send him to Elko for. The mother said, "Oh, my boy couldn't have done that because he was home all night. And I know he was home all night." And I led her on and led her on, and she swore that the kid went to bed at nine o'clock; she looked in on him at ten; she was sure he was home and everything—. Well, the kid had stolen the tires about nine-thirty in the evening. She said that she had looked in on him at nine, nine-thirty, ten o'clock, and was absolutely certain that he stayed home. I said, "Just a moment," and I

called the kid in, and I said, "Tell your mother about the tires."

And he said, "I stole the tires."

And if you could've seen the look on that mother's face! It was one of shame; it was one of surprise. I've never seen a look on a woman's face like that. She was very apologetic, and she said, "I'm sorry that I lied to save this boy's reputation." And I think I convinced her that this was the wrong thing to do, because I never had any more problems with the boy himself, and no more problems with the parents.

But overall, the ten-year period of being a juvenile officer was really rewarding because, as I say, it wasn't only one or two kids that I feel I have saved from going wrong, but it was several dozen. And if I'd never accomplished anything else in my lifetime, I'm certainly proud of this, because it does something to you to be able to build kids after they've started in to get off the path.

And while we're talking of service, after I left the Nevada Centennial Commission, I took on the job of becoming the editor of the Nevada Centennial magazine, not because of any financial rewards that I expected, because I didn't get any. Despite the fact the magazine was, I thought, an excellent magazine and gave a great deal of history of the state of Nevada, it never got off the ground and was much like the Centennial celebration itself. It was well thought out, but never got anywhere, circulation-wise, around the country. But this was done as a labor of love, may we say.

I might say also that while I was on the Centennial Commission, I attempted to do just exactly what you people are doing now, and that is to get the history of the people of the state of Nevada on tape, or in some sort of form so that it could be recorded somewhere or filed somewhere. That was one of the things that I did when I went around to the various

counties. I used to get the county people to pick out four or five old timers to try to get their history in the record. This never jelled, because none of the county committees ever jelled. But that's neither here nor there. I say that, as far as the service to the community is concerned, the state is concerned, this is more important to me than any personal glory.

## A TERM WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA BOARD OF REGENTS, 1947-1951

Getting into some of the political life as far as I am concerned, I decided to run for the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada in 1946. This was an office, at the time when I filed, that was practically overlooked by all of the people of the state of Nevada. Yet, it is a real important position as far as the people of the state of Nevada are concerned, because at that time it was the guiding board of the only higher education institution in the state of Nevada. Of course, it is doubly so now that Nevada Southern is in the picture. I certainly would not care to be on the Board of Regents at the present time because of the split between the north and the south as to who is going to get the small amount of money that is available for higher education in the state of Nevada.

I might say right here that at the time another college in southern Nevada was suggested by several people, I was completely against the establishment of the college in southern Nevada, because it was my theory that if one university was only fair, two universities would be doubly poor. I didn't

think there was enough money in the state of Nevada to support both institutions and give good educations to the kids that attended the two universities. And for four years of my term up there, I fought the establishment of a university in southern Nevada, despite the fact that I am from southern Nevada myself. But I felt very strongly, as I say, that we didn't have money enough to support one institution the way it should be supported, let alone two. However, looking at the picture now, I am sure that the Board of Regents is going to have to find money to support two institutions, because there's no doubt in the world that the greater population is in southern Nevada.

Regarding the population in southern Nevada, if everything predicted here comes to pass, there are going to be a million people in the Las Vegas Valley in 1980. Now, that's only twelve years away. Of course, if there are a million people in the valley, the tax base will expand, and probably there will be money enough to take care of both institutions.

However, the regents are faced with the problem of keeping pace with the growth in

southern Nevada, and it is a problem that is going to develop schisms between the north and the south that have been healed to some degree in the past several years. I can see the thing coming now because you've got a lot of people in southern Nevada who say that the population of southern Nevada is on the increase and is much larger than the population of Reno and the rest of the state. The figures certainly are right. I would say that sixty-five percent of the population of the state of Nevada is in southern Nevada. And the tax situation, as it is reflected in the gambling revenues and the sales tax revenues, gas tax revenues, everything indicates that this is where the money is. And certainly, the people under the Supreme Court decision of one person to one vote, means that you're going to have to recognize the fact that southern Nevada is going to dominate the picture in the state of Nevada. I say this, knowing very well that I was born and raised in Reno, have many ties in Reno, and still have a very definite place in my heart for northern Nevada—not only Reno—but Winnemucca and Elko, Sparks, Fallon, Winnemucca, Yerington, all of these places. I played baseball in all of the areas that I have talked about. I have very many friends in all of these areas. Having been at the legislature for six sessions, at least six sessions, both as a reporter and as an observer, I have developed a great number of friends all over the state of Nevada. And I say this about southern Nevada and Nevada Southern University with all due respect to these people. But you've got to satisfy the areas where the population is. It's the same way in California. Los Angeles is certainly the population center of the state of California, and take a look at the education picture down there and see how many state colleges they have in the southern part of the state, plus a branch—a used-to-be branch—of the University of California

at UCLA. UCLA, when I was a member of the Board of Regents of the University, was a branch of the California at Berkeley. And now look at it. UCLA is nearly as large as Berkeley, and state colleges all around the Los Angeles area probably outnumber those in the entire rest of the state of California. And you're going to have to take care of the people where the population is.

But getting back to the Board of Regents, as I say, I decided to file because it was—I was an alumnus of the University of Nevada and thought that it would be a nice idea for me to go back as the boss of an institution that I graduated from and stand on the steps at Morrill Hall and look out and tell the kids of the university, "Now I am your boss," just like Mr. George S. Brown and Mr. Wingfield and a few more of those people did who were on the Board of Regents when I was going to college. It was quite a thrill, and I really enjoyed the fact that not only did I get elected to the Board of Regents of the University, but had led the Regents ticket. I was elected by a good majority, and I think this was because I have so many friends in the other parts of the state.

Everybody ran "at-large" when I ran, and I did little campaigning. I had some cards printed, and I went from here up to Reno and stopped in Beatty, Tonopah, and all the way points, and left four or five cards with the people I knew, asked them for help, and that's the campaigning I did. It's a lot different now. People have to get out and spend a lot of money to get elected to the Board of Regents, which I can't understand, because they're spending a lot of money for just a lot of headaches; because running a university is something that, in my opinion, now is for the birds. Somebody has to do it, and I'm certainly—I don't mean to downgrade the people that are in the Board of Regents now;

they're doing a real fine job. They have many problems and problems that maybe are as big as the ones that I faced, in my term as a Regent of the University of Nevada.

When I was elected to the Board of Regents, the football team at University of Nevada was in its high era. They had Stan Heath who was playing quarterback, and people like Horace Gillom and Marion Motley, and all that type of people, who were holdovers from the Jim Aiken regime, and were being coached by Joe Sheeketski. Sheeketski had brought in quite a few people like Max Dodge, Roger Bissett, oh, Tom Kalminir, and they were going along real fine.

At the time that I was elected to the Board of Regents, the Boosters Club members in Reno were the ones who were getting the money for the scholarships for these people who were playing football. And when I got in there, about three or four months after I took office, we started looking at the dining hall records and found out that the Boosters Club was \$10,000 in arrears for paying for the food for the kids that were on the scholarship, the football players. So I insisted that we call the Boosters Club highlights into the conference. We got "Soapy" Southworth and Harry Frost and a couple of other people there, and told 'em—and I was very frank about the thing—and I said, "Look, this thing just can't go on. If we're going to support big time football, let's support it. If we're not, let's kick it out. But I am in a position where I was elected to the Board of Regents to run the University, and the best man would save the taxpayers' money. Well, if the taxpayers are going to have to pay for it—football scholarships—I think that something is wrong."

So we got a pledge from the Boosters association that they would wipe out the \$10,000 debt and run on a current basis. They said they would do that by the end of the

spring semester. This was in the fall of 1948, as I took office in January, 1947, and served four years. They said they would wipe it out by the fall semester and start all over. That would give them all winter and spring and during the summertime to get their scholarship house in order, and they'd wipe it out. Well, came fall and into the spring semester, and we took another look at the dining hall records, and not only had they not wiped out the \$10,000, but were a total of \$20,000 more in the hole.

So again, we called them in, and this time, we called Mr. Charlie Gorman, who was the comptroller of the University then, and asked him why he wasn't keeping them on a current basis. And he made the excuse that they were playing big time football, and so forth, and so on. And he was instructed at that time to keep them current. And again, the boys promised that they would wipe out the deficit and see that it was kept on a current basis. We didn't investigate any further, because we had told Gorman that he was to keep them on a current basis. We didn't investigate them any further until about the last six months of my first term—the first term was ending in about six months.

So we took a look at it and the scholarship committee or the Boosters committee owed the dining hall \$60,000, and I told the Regents that it was time to call a halt, that they were either going to pay the \$60,000 and make it up, or they were going to quit big time football. And Si Ross was president of the Board of Regents at the time—chairman, I guess it was. And I had decided that we should have a general meeting of the scholarship committee, the Boosters committee, the press, and the University of Nevada Regents. Such a meeting was called at El Cortez Hotel in Reno—a luncheon meeting—at which time the situation was discussed, and I made the statement that unless the money problem was

cleared up by the end of the spring semester before I left, I was going to present a resolution to the Board of Regents that we eliminate football at the University, cancel Sheeketski's contract, and go on from there.

So the bombshell hit the University of Nevada and the city of Reno, and everybody blamed me for trying to kill big time football. I'd like to say this: that I didn't kill big time football, big time football killed itself. Because a university the size of Nevada just can't work on a million-dollar football budget. There's no way that they can recoup the money that they were putting out for scholarships. You had Homecoming Day football games at the Mackay Stadium at the University. It would draw ten thousand people, and usually, they had football teams like Houston or St. Mary's or USF or some of those big time football teams, but you had to pay guarantees. You couldn't get 'em cheaply, and the guarantees that you had were eating up all the money—or the admission money that you got from the box office. And the only possible way that the scholarship program could be continued would be through the contributions of the merchants of the city of Reno and/or the rest of the state of Nevada.

At that time nobody from the southern part of the state was especially interested in football at the University of Nevada. They were four hundred miles away. There were a few kids from the Las Vegas area that were playing on the football team, although they did have Bill Morris, who was playing center, and Tommy Bell, who was playing end, and a couple of lesser luminaries, but there wasn't too much interest at southern Nevada about the University of Nevada football team because they had USC Trojans, the UCLA Bruins—some of the minor colleges—that were a lot closer to the people in Las Vegas than those of the University of Nevada.

Hence, you didn't get much interest toward Reno.

I don't know whether it was a lack of interest, or a lack of promotion on the part of the Boosters committee. But their contributions fell way below what they were supposed to be, and as a result, it fell upon the Board of Regents to supply the money for the scholarships. And as I told the people at the meeting that we had at El Cortez, I said, "Sixty thousand dollars will run the journalism school for one semester." I said, "I was elected to see, I think, that the kids got a proper education. While I am all for football, I'd like to see big time football, I can't see cutting the budget of a journalism course to take care of twenty-two, twenty-five football players.

And as a result, I was the bastard calf as far as the state of Nevada was concerned, because I had killed big time football. It was decided that Louis Lombardi, Dr. Louis Lombardi, with whom I went to school at the University of Nevada, and a fraternity brother, and Newt Crumley were to run for the Board of Regents with the specific idea of beating Cahlan. Four years prior, I had won by a real high majority. This time that I ran after the football fiasco—I think there were six people in the race, and I finished fifth. And I didn't get enough votes to wad a shotgun with. It was entirely due, I'm sure, to the fact that big time football was eliminated mainly through my efforts. And Lombardi and Crumley both made the statement during the campaign—and it was quite a campaign because they hit all parts of the state, boosted the thing up—that they were going to return big time football to the University of Nevada, that this was the only salvation of the state, and so forth, and so on. And it was very refreshing to me and it gave me a lot of satisfaction when, after they had been elected, they came out with the fact that Nevada couldn't afford big time football,

which of course vindicated me in my own mind. But it didn't vindicate me with the voters of the state of Nevada. So I was a victim of big time football. Oh, that's just one of the interesting highlights of my term with the Board of Regents.

I might say that it was quite interesting when I attended my first meeting of the Board of Regents. I was staying at the Riverside Hotel and Si Ross, of course, was the perennial chairman of the Board of Regents. And I walked into the Riverside Hotel and saw George Wingfield, Sr. sitting there, and I went up and spoke to him and he said, "Hi, Johnny. I understand you've been elected to the Board of Regents." He said, "When are you going to get rid of that son of a bitch, Si Ross?"

So I said, "What do you mean?"

And he said, "Don't you think he's been chairman of the Board of Regents long enough? He doesn't do anything," and so forth and so on.

And I told George, I said, "George, look. I haven't even attended one meeting of the Board of Regents, and I don't know whether Si Ross is due to get out or whether he's a good chairman. So I'm going to vote the way I see it."

So we reelected Si Ross as chairman of the board, and he served as chairman of the board during my entire tenure. And I might say that there was nobody—and I mean nobody—who knew the operations of the University of Nevada like Si Ross. And, from all the dealings that I had with Si and the association I had with him, I found that he was a very fair man; he never, at least when I was on the board, never forced his opinions on anybody, and usually threw suggestions out on the table, and let the rest of the board chew them up and then come to a decision. And I think Si Ross was one of the best influences in the University of Nevada that I

knew all the time I was directly interested in the University of Nevada.

And that comes around to the fact of John Moseley and his departure from the University. I think it was about the second year that I was on the Board of Regents, and we were having battles with the legislature over the budget. The Board of Regents would present one budget, the president would present another, and the comptroller would present a third. When the legislators got in a hassle over the two budgets, the one that was submitted by the Board of Regents and the one that was submitted by the president, the comptroller (Mr. Gorman) would come up with a third budget and inform the legislators that this was the only budget that counted because he was the comptroller; he knew more about it than the Board of Regents and the president, and therefore, they ought to accept his budget. Well, this had been going on for years, I understood, at the time. And it was always, or most times, it was Gorman's budget that was adopted, and not the Regents' budget. That was not generally known, but it certainly is the truth.

So we decided that there was only going to be one budget, and that that would be the budget presented by the Regents. And we called in Dr. Moseley and Mr. Gorman and told them that they were to stay strictly away from the legislature unless they were invited in by the legislators. They were to discuss *no* budget, and that the committee for the budget was to be Si Ross and Al Hilliard, who was on the board at the time. They were the ones that would go to the legislature and defend the budget, and if any other witnesses were needed, then Ross and Hilliard would decide whether they should call in Dr. Moseley and Gorman.

Well, the meeting was on a Friday and Saturday, and the legislature was already in

session. And the first thing that happened, I got a telephone call from Carson City on Monday from one of my friends up there to whom I had told about the situation with regard to Moseley, and he said, "Johnny, what the hell are you talkin' about? You told me that Moseley was not going to be haunting the halls of the legislature at any time during the session. He is up here, handing out pamphlets for the agricultural department."

So immediately, I called Si Ross and told him. I said, "Si, what's Moseley doing at the legislature?" Si said he didn't know he was over there, and I said, "Well, he is." And two or three other times in the interim between the meetings, Moseley was at the legislature despite the definite fact that a resolution had been passed, was on the books of the—I'm sure it's on the minutes of the—Board of Regents, that Moseley and Gorman were strictly to stay away from the legislature.

Well, at the—let's see, it was, I think, during the football game down in San Diego when the University of Nevada played Villanova in the Harbor Bowl, I guess, at San Diego. And my wife and daughter and I were in San Diego to see the football game and we were invited over to a cocktail party at which Moseley was present, and several brother SAE's were present—Moseley being an SAE. I remember standing out in the kitchen of the apartment in San Diego and Moseley asking about how the thing was going, and the SAE brethren were talking to me about what a great job Moseley was doing, and I quietly said to John, "If you've got any contacts, you'd better take advantage of them right now."

And he said, "What do you mean?"

And I said, "Well, at the next meeting of the Board of Regents I'm going to ask for your resignation." Of course, that busted up the party right there.

So the next meeting after that was in January or February, and I prepared a statement of policy. The Friday night before the Saturday meeting, I called Chris Sheerin and Sam Arentz into my room at the Riverside Hotel. And I gave both of them a copy of the resolution. And I said—I told 'em—that I was going to introduce that resolution to the Board of Regents at the meeting on Saturday. I explained to them the whole situation, and they were familiar with some of the stuff. This was not the only time that Moseley had just defied the Regents. And they agreed to support me. So after they had left, I went up to see Si Ross and told him that I was going to ask for the resignation of Moseley and also the resignation of Gorman, because of the fact that the two were diametrically opposed on everything, and that if Moseley were removed that there would be every chance that Gorman would be put in as president of the University, and this, I couldn't see. Si then called in several people from Rena, most of them Masons, of which Gorman was one, and they pleaded with me to—they said, "It's all right to go ahead with Moseley, but can't you be sympathetic with Gorman?"

And I said, "I'm sympathetic with Gorman. The fact of the matter is that I was brought up alongside of his family on Center Street in Reno. We lived at 815, and he lived on the corner of Eighth and Center Street, and we were very good friends. Harold Gorman was one of my best friends, and always has been." I could see where there was some way of salvaging Gorman. So I said, "All right. Now, Gorman is coming close to the retirement age, and," I said, "I will agree that Gorman be given a leave of absence on full pay for one year." And I said, "I'll probably get criticism because we're paying two presidents of the University of Nevada." But, I said, "This situation has got to be remedied. Moseley has got to go as far as

I'm concerned because he's—just doesn't take the word of the Regents of the University of Nevada who are supposed to set policy, and he is setting policy himself, and I think that this is a very bad idea, as far as the operation of the University is concerned."

So that was agreed to, and I presented a resolution at the next meeting—the next day—and it was passed by a unanimous vote. And then it came to the situation of finding an interim replacement for Moseley and Gorman. So Si Ross suggested Parker, Colonel Parker, who was the head of the military department at the University. And when I found Parker's background, his achievements, not only in the military, but in other segments of the economy as well, I thought that his qualifications were such that he could very definitely operate the University in the interim. The fact of the matter is, when, after Parker'd been there about six months, I was all in favor of making him president of the University of Nevada, but he did not have a PH.D. degree, and therefore could not be considered. It was something that had to do with the professorial angle of the University president. But Parker did a very fine job.

I might say that while we were seeking a president for the University of Nevada, we had many, many applications. We had settled them down to about five, and I was down in my office in the *Review-Journal* when a man by the name of Malcolm Love came in to see me. He said that Jack Conlon (who now is Senator Cannon's executive assistant) had said that the University of Nevada was looking for a new president, and Jack suggested that Malcolm come down and see me and discuss the thing. He told me at the time that he was not looking for the president's job. He had a good job in Colorado—at the University of Colorado—and was not at all seeking the president's job. And after talking to him for

half, three quarters of an hour, I asked him—I said, "Why don't you apply for the position. You haven't applied for it yet, and so why don't you apply for it and see what happens?"

And he said, "Well, I will."

He went back to Colorado and wrote a letter of application and put in his resume, and it was very satisfactory as far as the educational background was concerned and everything. I was quite impressed with the man when I talked to him at the *Review-Journal* office. So it came down to three people. And we eliminated one of them by general consent and got down to Love and one other, and we were discussing the relative merits of the two people at the end of the session—the business session—that day, and they postponed the selection until the next meeting of the board.

And at that time, I came back on the plane and sitting alongside me was the other man, a Californian, who applied for the presidency of the University. He didn't know who I was, but I knew who he was. So I very—I hope—adroitly, got him into a conversation, and by the time I got to Las Vegas, I had decided that this man was not for the presidency of the University. If I would mention his name, most people would know why he was not. But I—in all fairness to him—he now is president of another university that had many, many difficulties before he got into the position he is in now. So it got down, in my estimation, to Love.

So we wired him to come down and talk to us at the Regents' meeting—the next Regents meeting—and he came down. And we discussed it with him for, oh, half an hour, and then we excused him. I told them the experience that I had with the Californian, and That I would not agree to accept him as president of the University. So I finally won the three others on to my side and Love was

elected president by a vote of four to one, and then it was made unanimous.

So that's how Love came to the University of Nevada. And I don't say that as a pun, either. But it was very unfortunate because his wife did not like Nevada, and I can see why, because she had allergies, and she was just—her health was not good while she was at the University of Nevada. He stayed, I think, two years, and then received this offer from San Diego and went down to San Diego State and became president. I think that our judgment certainly has been vindicated by the way he has made San Diego State into one of the leading colleges on the West Coast, if not the United States. And it's certainly something that I am proud of having a part in because he was a very fine administrator, lie was very affable; everybody liked him, and he had great administrative ability. And I was certainly sorry to see him go. But, I guess that's the way the ball bounces.

Was he the one who left so suddenly, without telling us why he was going? Yes, it was a shame, because he didn't handle the thing—just overnight he announced that he was going to San Diego. Of course, that's not the way to do the job. But I was—I was not on the Board of Regents at the time, and had I been, I am sure that I would have been informed, because Malcolm and I were—were and still are—very good friends. He comes up here every once in a while and sees Archie Grant, who is on the Board of Regents now and was chairman of the Board of Regents for many years. And every time he comes up, I see Malcolm and his wife and we're still very good friends. And as I say, had I been a member of the Board of Regents, that wouldn't've happened the way it did. But unfortunately, it did, and that's it.

Did Dr. Love have any particular instructions about faculty? Well, he was very reticent to give people tenure. I mean it was

a situation that was forced on him; it was forced on me, too. I am not for tenure until they prove themselves, and I have found out a lot of times that, once these people get tenure, they lose incentive and gain egotism. I don't say all of them, but some of the people do. Let me give you an illustration. There was a professor at the University who was—or the Regents were discussing what should be done with a particular course, whether it should be in the mining department or in the arts and science department. It was a course that the requirement was definitely a part of the mining curriculum. However, the majority of people who took the course were from arts and science. So we decided that—the Regents decided that—it should be transferred from the mining department to the arts and science department. That was not a great thing to make an issue out of, but one of the professors appeared before the Regents. He had tenure, had been there for many, many years, and he came in there and told the Regents that if they were to transfer this one course into the arts and science, that he was going to quit. And I told the man, I said, "You know, you're—you and my father were very, very good friends. I've known you a long time, and I think you've known me a long time and you've known my father a long time." And I said, "When anybody—any employee of the Board of Regents—comes up to the Board of Regents and starts telling them how they're going to run the University and that he would quit if they don't, I'm ready to accept your resignation right now."

The man tried to back down, and he said, "Well, I didn't mean it that way, uh—"

And it all developed because the subject was transferred to the arts and science department and it made just as much sense anywhere as it did there, and so all the regents went along as far as policy was concerned.

But this is the situation you run into when you get tenure among some people. Now, don't misunderstand me, tenure is good, and I—well, it's the same thing as a union for the university professors. They are assured of longevity in their life's work, which is perfectly all right with me if they don't overstep the bounds like this guy did. And it was a very simple matter. He could've come in and made his protest and walked out. But having been there, he's a lot like a lot of people that are in any business, they—or a politician that's in, that gets reelected eight or nine times; he thinks that the city hall belongs to him and he's going to run it the way he thinks that it ought to be run, instead of asking the citizens. And the same way with employees of any institution. Somebody's got to make policy, and it's up to the elected official of the people to make that policy.

Dr. Love wasn't instructed, then, to make it kind of hot for some particular department or professor? Let's say he was not officially instructed to. At that time, there were, and believe me when I tell you this: that there were some very divisive elements at the University of Nevada. I knew what was going on, as I had a couple of pipelines at the University in the students. And I got my information from the students. And I'd like to say that Al Hilliard was the sounding board for all of this dissident group of professors at the University of Nevada. They used to go over to Al's home and had coffee or cocktails, or whatever it was, and discuss the situation. And Al would bring their complaints to the Board of Regents meetings. And believe me, it got to be a point when every time Al Hilliard would open his mouth about somebody on the faculty, that the other four members of the Board would figure that here came something that was a complaint that was tinged with sort of violent-colored paint. I will not make

any accusations, but certainly they were not things that were legitimate complaints. When these complaints would be made, I would get ahold of my pipelines among the student body, and I would find out, four times out of five, that these guys were teaching something else—extra-curricular stuff—that was not in the university area. And a lot of it was held under cover—no question about it—that these guys were—the guys that were making the trouble, and I think if you recall correctly your newspaper comments, there were some legal proceedings instituted against the University of Nevada by some of these guys, and they were the ones that were causing all the trouble.

Oh, and I might say also, that one of the things that kicked back on us, as members of the Board of Regents, we decided it would be a very good idea if we had an honorary Board of Regents, consisting of people who could, if they would, write into their will thousands of dollars which would be placed in the coffers of the University of Nevada to do with as we saw fit. So we went to the legislature and got the authority to set up this honorary Board of Regents and explained to the legislators exactly what we had in mind, and they thought it was a good idea, because it might get some scholarships or some donations—foundations from these various people. And so we set up the honorary board. I can't remember; I know Noble Getchell was one of them, and, oh, there were three or four other people, I think we had nine, or something. And some of the newspapers got ahold of the thing and were yelping about an Honorary Board of Regents and what did the Regents need another board to tell them what to do, and so forth, and so on. And unfortunately, we didn't tell the press about this deal—what the idea of the Honorary Board of Regents was. And that was the reason it backfired.

But that was the start of expanding the Board to nine members, and making them representative of various divisions of the state of Nevada. Unfortunately, that was one thing that I'm not very proud of as far as my activity was concerned on the Board of Regents. It was something that I should have known better, because I should've taken the press into our confidence and let them know what we were going to do. I didn't; it was a mistake, and that's the answer.

But it did get legislation to change the whole setup of the Board of Regents, and I think for the better, because, after all, a five-member Board of Regents, elected at large, certainly does not represent the entire people in the state of Nevada. When I was on, there were two from Washoe County, one from Douglas County, one from Elko County, and one from Clark County. So you can see that the northern section of the state dominated the Board of Regents. I don't say that critically, I just say that as a matter of fact. There were three from the north and one from the east and one from the south. Ely was not represented at all. So I think that the bill that they passed for nine members of the Board to be elected as they are elected now is much better than the old situation.

But I had quite some stormy career as a Regent of the University of Nevada. I'm not at all sorry that I spent the four years, because they were very enlightening and very satisfying to me, and I hope I contributed just a little to the benefit of the college from which I was graduated. I feel I did. I don't know if the citizens of the state of Nevada think so, but that's their problem.

## EVOLUTION OF THE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION AND THE NEVADA STATE DIVISION OF ARCHIVES

One of the things that I am quite proud of having accomplished was setting up the Nevada State Archives Division up in Johnny Koontz's Secretary of State's office. This idea hit me when I was at the legislature one session, and Johnny Koontz invited me downstairs to see all the records that they had down there, and how they were kept. These records were kept in the basement, in a room that had dirt floors and wood partitions for putting the books in them, and the books were scattered all over the place. He showed me one book which was the original book of civil law in the state of Nevada, handwritten. It was a book about, oh, I should judge twenty-four inches wide and ten or twelve inches long. And it was all written in—handwritten. It was the first draft of civil law that was passed by the legislature. And someone had put the book up under a steam pipe and the steam pipe had leaked and eaten away the cover and about the first ten or fifteen pages of this priceless document. It was the first civil law passed in the state of Nevada in 1864, and it was all handwritten, beautifully handwritten.

Perhaps I should explain here that I attended six consecutive sessions of the Nevada legislature, representing the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* through 1960 and later representing the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. The legislators were my friends and I had done them many favors through my writing and reports on the various sessions.

I decided at that time that something ought to be done to protect these documents. Under the state law, the Secretary of State is charged with preserving all documents relating to the state. The only place he had to put them was down in the basement, and nobody had paid any attention to them since 1864, or since the capitol was built, because they just seemed to be piling up down there in the basement. When I realized something had to be done, I went to State Senator Martin Duffy, from Goldfield, and got him to come down to the basement, and I showed him—or had Johnny Koontz show him—what he had shown me. And as a result, we drafted a bill to set up a state archives bureau in the Secretary of State's office.

Well, it was about that time that they were having a lot of trouble with the school funds. The legislature was revising the Peabody Formula, which had been used as a basis to distribute funds and was not satisfactory. They were having a dickens of a time trying to get money enough to support the schools. So when the Archives bill was introduced, it was sent to the finance committee for discussion and died in the finance committee. I did everything that I knew how to do to get the thing out of the committee, but they said, and rightly so, I believe, that this was just setting up another bureau that was going to cost increasingly more as the years went on, so they were not going to pass the bill.

Well, the next session of the legislature, I had Martin Duffy introduce the bill again, and it had the same fate. But during that time, it was the 1962 session of the legislature, Governor Sawyer set up a Centennial Commission for the centennial of 1964 and had it funded. And I was named the managing director of the Nevada centennial celebration. Unfortunately, I had different ideas than the members of the Centennial Commission that were appointed by Governor Sawyer. I had the idea that the thing should be a statewide celebration, and was laying the program in that manner.

I had envisioned a big celebration over the entire year and had suggested, as a kick-off for the celebration, that we would dedicate the Ponderosa Ranch, which is used in the TV series, "Bonanza," and make Ben Cartwright and Hoss and Little Joe honorary citizens of the state of Nevada, figuring that, should we do this, we would get Chevrolet (which sponsors the Bonanza program) interested in the Nevada Centennial and also, NBC, which shows the series on television. I was told that Incline Village, for which the Centennial Commission chairman was the ad agency, would take care of setting up the dedication,

and that was the last I heard of it. Nothing was done.

Secondly, I suggested to the Board the Goldfield Hotel, which probably was one of the most famous buildings in the state of Nevada, because it was built during the big boom at Goldfield and had more stock traded in its lobby than was traded on the San Francisco Exchange at that time. And anybody that knows anything about the Goldfielders, no matter where they are, if there's a celebration in Goldfield, they'll break their necks trying to get there. So I suggested that we reopen the Goldfield Hotel and have a costume ball at which all of the state officials would dress in costumes and anybody who wanted to come to Goldfield would be perfectly welcome. We could have a barbecue and everything. Of course, there's no hotel up there, no motels, but they could have stayed in Tonopah, or they could have brought their trailers and campers and tents or anything, and we could have had a real wingding there at Goldfield. I got a telegram from the chairman of the Centennial Commission saying that, "George Wingfield is dead, Tex Rickard's dead, and so's Goldfield. Forget the idea." So, that was number two.

The third thing that practically broke the camel's back and brought about my resignation as director of the Centennial was the fact that in Las Vegas there is a man by the name of Antonio Morelli, who is director of music at the Sands Hotel. He is a very fine musician, composer, and producer. When I had a meeting down here with the leaders of Clark County to suggest what could be done in Clark County, Mr. Morelli told me and the other members of the county committee that he would plan and write a pageant for the Centennial which would more or less picture the history of the state of Nevada from when the pioneers first came here until the present

time. He would do this and direct the program and the staging of this pageant in three communities—in Elko, Reno or Carson City, and Las Vegas; in this way, give it exposure to all three sections of the state, Elko in the east and southeast, Reno in the north and would take in as far as Yerington and Fallon, and that area, and then Las Vegas to take in the rest of the state. It would be staged during the summer, and students at the high schools or at the universities would be used as the chorus and underlings in the pageant. The stars of the pageant could have been recruited either from the stages of local Las Vegas resorts or the resorts at Lake Tahoe and Reno. And in addition to that, he would guarantee that there would be \$71,000 from the Musicians' welfare fund, which would be available to stage this pageant for the Centennial. And that it would probably cost the state \$60,000.

Well, the way Morelli outlined the thing to me and to the other members of the county committee, it was something that would probably make "Oklahoma!" look—well, anyway, it would be somewhere near the "Oklahoma!" stature. He had it all outlined in his mind—not completely outlined, but the story of the pageant outlined in his mind. I thought that this would be of tremendous value, not only as a tourist lure, but as a focal point for the various counties in the state to latch onto, to take care of their county shows.

I was told by the commission that this was too elaborate a deal for the state of Nevada to put on, and to forget about it. So, at that time, I decided that there was no need of me going any further as executive secretary.

I had already arranged with the Colt Firearms Company to produce several Centennial Colt revolvers, which they did. I also contacted the Jim Beam whiskey company to put those special bottles out, which they did. And incidentally, those

bottles are selling now anywhere from \$75 to \$90 apiece because of the fact that there weren't many of them put out.

I also had the idea of putting out special Nevada coins, which would be used as legal tender in the state of Nevada and would be redeemable at any bank in the state of Nevada at face value. I was going to put out quarters, halves, and dollars. We could have made a lot of money with this sort of thing, because a lot of them would be taken home for souvenirs and never cashed in. The committee didn't feel that we could do this because it probably would be counterfeiting United States coins. So this idea was dropped, despite the fact that about two years ago, they started in minting coins for the various casinos in the state of Nevada that were used in the slot machines. There is just plenty of money being made on those coins because of the fact that so many are being taken out of the state as souvenirs. This could have been done with Centennial coins.

There were a lot of things that I suggested, that as the first year went along—I served one year; I could see that the Centennial Commission was not interested in putting on any sort of a big celebration. I toured the state several times during the year that I was director, and set up county committees. And we had some very fine ideas come up. Oh, Elko wanted to set up false fronts on the stores all along the highway that runs through Elko, and make it a complete village. Winnemucca wanted to set up tours up at Fort McDermitt and put on Indian dances for the tourists that were coming into the community—make it a tour from, leave from Winnemucca in the morning and go to McDermitt and have lunch, and then come back to Winnemucca, and get the people to stay an extra day. There were some very fine ideas that came up as I made my trips.

And when the committee—the state committee—made their rules and regulations, they said that the state committee could not be called upon for any money to finance the various county shows. So I had the idea that one way that we could beat this rule was to put out these coins and have the various areas sell them, and take the money that they realized from the coins to finance their shows. And whoever had the flag concessions and souvenir concessions would have to share the money—rather than with the state committee—[with] the various county committees. And the money that was taken in by the various counties would stay in the counties. But the state committee couldn't see this, because they wanted the souvenirs, all the money from the souvenirs, to go into the state fund so that they would have enough money to put on their show.

I also had an idea that we could start a covered wagon from St. Joseph, Missouri, come out through Nevada as a trek that was made to the mines in Virginia City. This was turned down. I also wanted to hire, for the duration of the summer rodeo season, an ox wagon, and transport it to all these rodeos as a—this was the year prior to the celebration—and transport the thing to all the rodeos as an advertisement of the Nevada Centennial, and then wind up at the Tournament of Roses in the Rose Parade with the ox cart, or ox wagon, decorated in flowers and headed by an Indian band, dressed in buckskin costumes, and the drum major in the feathered headdress of the Indians. This also was turned down.

And so I could see I was getting no place in a hurry, so I resigned the job. And, as a result, the celebration of the Centennial was confined entirely to Nevada Day in Carson City.

However, there was a real good result, and this is what I started to talk about when

I started to talk about the Archives. It's a long way toward getting back to the legislative session, but the legislative session in '66, I guess it was, I found out that the Centennial Commission had turned back \$70,000 from the amount of money that was appropriated by the legislature as unexpended funds. So I got the idea that, here was a good chance to get the State Archives set up and, even by allowing the Centennial Commission to take credit for setting the thing up, if that had to be done. Moreover, I went to the assembly and got all of the native-born Nevadans to introduce a bill into the legislature to set up the State Archives. I think the original appropriation was for \$45,000, I'm not sure, but it was somewhere around there. It wasn't all of the funds that were returned by the Centennial Commission.

It was introduced into the lower house about the middle of the session, and I fought for, oh, three or four weeks before to get the thing out of the committee. I knew that if I could get it on the floor, we could get the thing passed. So about two weeks before the session ended, Jim Gibson, the chairman of the ways and means committee, got word—I spread the word through the introducers of the bill—that one of his bills was doomed to defeat on the floor of the house unless that Archives bill came out of committee. And the next day, they voted the bill out of committee, and it went through the assembly without a negative vote.

So it went over into the senate into the finance committee, and I went in and sat with the finance committee while they were debating the bill. I told Floyd Lamb, who was the chairman of the committee, and John Fransway and Emerson Titlow, Mahlon Brown, I guess was the other member, that they had promised me the session before—or whenever it was that the second bill was

introduced by Martin Duffy—if they could be shown how they could get the money to finance this thing, that they would vote the bill out. So I told them that, “Here I came with this \$45,000, now you damn well better get the bill out, or we’ll see what happens!”

So they voted it out, and it got onto the floor. When they started the roll call, apparently, they had the thing rigged so that they would vote “No”—the first seven guys would vote “No” and the eighth guy would vote “No,” then he would change his vote. Well, the thing got beat the first time around. But then somebody got up—I’ve forgotten who it was—and said that, “I decided to change my vote to ‘Aye’ from ‘Nay,’” and then they all got on the floor to vote “Aye.” I was in there—of course so they were giving me a big rib.

But we finally got the bill through. And at home, I have the pen that the governor signed the bill with, and a picture of him signing it in my presence, and also, a copy of the bill that he signed. So that is in my archives—my personal archives.

I certainly am very proud of that fact, because since the bill was passed, Johnny Koontz has a very fine man up there who is the state archivist, and he has done a tremendous job of filing and indexing these things. It’s the first time in the history of the state of Nevada that such has been done. I was told recently by Russ MacDonald, who is the bill drafter up there, that if I accomplished nothing else, the archivist got those laws into such shape they don’t have to go down and paw through piles of books to come up with the things they need to draft new bills. So in that way, alone, it saved the state of Nevada a lot of money. And it has also codified and indexed a lot of the state papers that nobody knew that the state of Nevada had.

Since the thing has been in operation, there have been very, very many donations

to the archives. One of them was a flag—the last flag that flew over the Indian reservation at Halleck. This was sent to the archivist by the granddaughter, I think, of the last commanding officer who took down the flag and kept it. His family didn’t want it, and she didn’t know what to do with it. As soon as they found out that the archives had been set up, they sent it there. As the years go by, many more historic records will accumulate there. If anybody is interested, they should go see the archives section because they’ve got records that go clear back to 1862 in the beginnings of the state of Nevada. As I say, there are a lot of state papers down there that are invaluable to researchers.

Another one of the reasons that I had the State Archives in mind was that Johnny Koontz showed me a letter from Washington, D. C., which was written to Governor Nye and was signed by A. Lincoln, and somebody had seen the letter and cut off the signature, making it, of course, of no value without the signature. This is the type of material that I think, and always have thought, should be preserved for posterity. I’m certainly proud that I had at least a little part in setting up the State Archives, and it’s going to be a pride of mine, and I’m certain, the rest of my family, for as long as they live.



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## SKETCHES OF SOME NEVADA POLITICIANS I HAVE KNOWN

This subject naturally leads to reminiscences of the political figures who either lived in Las Vegas or visited here with whom I became fairly well acquainted. I told you about Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Here is an incident that is not generally known. When Roosevelt came to Las Vegas to dedicate Hoover or Boulder Dam, James Cashman, Sr., as usual, was in charge of the welcoming committee for Roosevelt. Cashman had a very good friend by the name of Claude Mackey, who was the WPA Director in southern Nevada. Mackey and his WPA crew had built a road into the Lee Canyon area, of which Mackey was very, very proud. Senator Key Pittman, the senior senator from Nevada and a powerful figure in Washington, also insisted that the President must see what the WPA had accomplished in Nevada. So nothing would do but that the President should go—he wanted to go up—to see this WPA Project. (I don't know that he wanted to go up, but the people wanted to take him up to see it, and he was not averse to going because he had a couple of hours to

waste before his train left.) So they took off in a motor caravan to Lee Canyon.

Well, they overlooked the fact that they could go up the road all right, but returning would be different, as there was no way to turn the automobile around in the canyon at the end of the road project. So they were stuck up in the mountains. Finally, the chauffeur of the automobile—I don't know whether he was a local person or whether he was one of Roosevelt's chauffeurs—but, anyway, he said, "If you'll get the President out of the automobile, I'll get it turned around." Because of the President's handicap, this was an embarrassment to everyone. As he waited outside the car, it was moved forward and backward, making a little turn at a time. After a delay of about an hour and a half, the driver got the car turned around so that it could start back down.

Well, some of the Secret Service people, who were waiting in Las Vegas while others went with Roosevelt to the mountains, were just sweating themselves out real good. They didn't know whether Roosevelt was at the

bottom of a canyon, in the mountains up there, or what the dickens had happened, and there was no telephone or way to find out. After about an hour and a half of waiting, a couple of them started out toward the canyon. But they met the caravan coming down from the mountains about ten miles out, so they turned around and came back and loaded Roosevelt aboard the train, and sent him on his way. All the reporters from around the country naturally were speculating on what a real big headline it would be if Roosevelt were killed in a car crash up in the mountains of Lee Canyon, where he should not have been. The Secret Service had been in the area for many days to check for security on the President's every move, but nobody checked Lee Canyon, where it never was intended he would go. It was a great relief to everyone when that train pulled out of the Las Vegas station with the President safely aboard.

Then I also told you about Harry Truman when he came here as the head of the committee investigating the Basic Magnesium, Incorporated plant. And as I say, I became quite well acquainted with him. I suppose that I could have gotten into the President's office in Washington when Truman became President, but I never tried.

And then, when John Kennedy came to Las Vegas, when he was running for the nomination, my brother-in-law, Herbert M. "Herb" Jones, was very active in the Kennedy for President campaign in the southern Nevada area. In fact, he was chairman of the Kennedy for President campaign here—a part of the entire Nevada campaign. So I met Kennedy when he was here, and managed to talk to him several times. Then I saw him two or three times down in Los Angeles at the Biltmore Hotel where the Kennedy headquarters were during the 1960

Democratic National Convention, which I covered for the *Review-Journal*.

I also became very well acquainted with Lyndon Johnson, mainly through my brother's (A. E. Cahlan's) activity for his candidacy. My brother was one of the first to promote Johnson and the last to leave him—he supported him all the way through. Johnson came to Las Vegas one time for a rally at the Convention Center, and my brother was out to meet him, and when Johnson got off the plane, he grabbed my brother around the shoulder and said, "Well, even if the South deserted me, I've still got you," which meant my brother was still supporting him, and that the South had left him.

I also conversed with him when he was out at the Convention Center at a rally and cocktail party. It was an interesting sidelight that while they had the reception for Johnson at one end of the Convention Center in the Gold Room—and a cocktail party which was the usual thing to do—the LDS church was holding its stake or regional meeting in the rotunda, at the other end of the Convention Center. So it was quite a contrast to walk from an LDS conference, which some Mormon people did—from the LDS conference in the rotunda to the cocktail party in the Gold Room. But this is one of the things that makes Las Vegas unique—that you can do something like this, and nobody's really perturbed about it. And I also was fairly active in Johnson's campaign headquarters in Los Angeles.

Florence, my wife, and I sat directly behind Lady Bird and the two Johnson girls in the balcony the afternoon that Johnson was nominated as Vice President, and saw the reaction of the three women members. Of course, the girls were not nearly as impressed as Lady Bird was. Lady Bird sort of sobbed a couple of times and then smiled. And I never could figure out whether it was sadness that

Johnson took the vice presidency, or whether it was so much joy that she had that she was overcome. The kids rose and screamed and clapped their hands and joined the gallery jubilation. But, as I say, I don't know whether Lady Bird was happy or sad. Anyway, that's the way it was.

How would I characterize some of these Presidents that I've met and talked to? The most human guy of the whole bunch of them was Harry Truman. Of course, I knew Harry Truman before he was President, but from what I have heard, he hasn't changed. He at that time was a Missouri haberdasher who had been selected United States Senator, and he didn't quite know how it happened. And I understand that it was the same way when he was tapped for vice president, and he didn't know why anybody would want Harry Truman for Vice President. And then when he got to be President, he didn't change a great deal. I think that as far as history is concerned, I think that he will go down in history as a human President, much like President Lincoln. I don't say that Truman had all the attributes of Lincoln, but he did have that homely attribute which was, I am sure, responsible for his defeat of Dewey in the election when the two of them were running against each other. Truman -lust was able to get to the people. I mean, he didn't have to go out and shake hands like a lot of the rest of these people did. He was like your Uncle Pete, and just a nice guy. Human—had all of the human frailties, as is shown by his outburst at the critic who said his daughter, Margaret's, voice stank, and so he called him an s.o.b., and that was it. It didn't make any difference whether he was President; he was still the father of Margaret Truman, and that's the way he felt. And I think he was a very human guy. As far as his political accomplishments were concerned, history will have to tell that.

Roosevelt, very, very egotistical. He was a man who always talked down at you—if you saw him in public. Of course, if you were in the room where he was, there was no one who dominated the picture as much as Roosevelt; and I think this proved to be true when he was the President. And I think one of the things that happened was that Roosevelt never would allow anybody to get up—even on the same level with him as a political leader. He cut them all down. And Roosevelt, in my estimation, at least, believed that he was anointed, and that he was going to be the king of the world. And I don't think that Eleanor did anything to deter him in that thought. In fact, I think she was his campaign manager. Roosevelt, there's no doubt about it, was a very brilliant man. Had Roosevelt not gone on to a third and fourth term, I think he probably would have gone down in history as one of the greatest Presidents in history. But his third and fourth terms just—he made so many mistakes, and his health was so bad in his fourth term that he just couldn't function; it was much like Wilson in the last part of his term. He was a sick man. And a sick man does not think straight.

As far as Hoover is concerned, I have never known two people who were as entirely different as Hoover and Roosevelt. Hoover was a typical engineer. He didn't communicate with people. He knew what he was doing, but he couldn't get the meaning of his words and the theory of his program over to the people. I think that Hoover showed that he was a great man, in the years after he left the Presidency. If the same thing had happened to him during the time he was President as what happened after he was President, and his humanizing of people, I think he would have been recognized as a very fine President. I think Hoover will be known not so much for his term as President as for what he did before

and after he got out of the Presidency, because he accomplished things that nobody else ever could have accomplished. And he was a very brilliant man and very well educated, very erudite, and had all of the—he looked like a President, and I think Hoover was a great man. He inherited the situation that nobody could have beat. Roosevelt then stepped in. Hoover had outlined programs that could have whipped the Depression, but Congress postponed action. As a result, there was a Depression. Roosevelt stepped in, had the guts to make the moves that Hoover couldn't make, and Roosevelt was such an egotist and through his egoism became a leader who bent Congress to his will.

I don't think that there is anybody who could deny that Roosevelt had more or less a hypnotic influence on the people of the United States. You would hear him get up there and say, "My friends..." and start out on those fireside chats, and you'd believe whatever he told you. He believed he was sitting on the right hand of God—that he was the chosen man. There wasn't any doubt about it. One time I observed people down on Fremont Street in Las Vegas during a fireside chat. A loudspeaker was set up while the Democrats were having some kind of a meeting upstairs in a room at the Eagles Hall. There were hundreds of people out on the street, and rather than listen to the speech (I never was one of Roosevelt's great admirers), I watched the expressions on the faces of the people who were on the streets there. Their mouths were open, and their eyes were glazed, and they were just hypnotized by the man. And this is what he did. He did a real fine job, as I say, during the first two terms.

Kennedy—I don't know. I was more influenced in my opinion of Kennedy by his two brothers than I was by him. Teddy was a little snip. He was—he told people what to

do; he didn't *ask* anybody what they would do or how. He *told* them, "This is the way I want it done." Bobby was, oh, just sort of a, I don't know, a juvenile delinquent. I had little respect for either Bobby or Teddy. As far as John was concerned, I think that he had much the same appeal that Roosevelt had. I don't know whether it was his Massachusetts speech, although Roosevelt had the same kind of speaking ability that Kennedy had, and Kennedy had much of that hypnotic influence that Roosevelt had. I think that John Kennedy would have become a great President had he lived to finish out his one term, and probably two terms. He had the leadership ability. I didn't think much of some of his programs, but I mean he was the President of the United States and he was going for all the people, and that was it. I thought that John Kennedy had great possibilities, and his assassination certainly was a tragedy, because he was just getting into the swing of the Presidency, and I think he would have become a good President.

As far as Lyndon Johnson is concerned [five-second pause], the pause is because I'm trying to make up my mind what place he will take in history. When Lyndon Johnson was the majority leader of the Senate, he was probably the most powerful man in Washington, even more powerful than the President because it was he who decided whether the President's program went through, or was killed. At the time he was running for President—for the nomination for President—and as majority leader of the United States Senate, he was a different type man than he is today. No doubt about it, he was a very astute and maneuvering politician when he was majority leader. Arm-twisting and soft-soaping, and all of the rest of the things that are necessary for a politician, he had. He could make you feel like you were a long-lost friend just by shaking your hand. He always grabbed your right hand with his right

hand and put his left hand under your elbow and sort of milked your hand like he'd milk a cow. And this was sort of an interesting thing because this he did with everybody, and just while he was talking to you, he'd just squeeze your hand like he was milking a cow.

He changed when he became President of the United States. And I can tell you how he changed because I told you how close my brother was to him during his campaign to get the 1960 nomination for the United States Presidency. My brother happened to be back in Washington after the Kennedy assassination and Johnson's succession to office. Al went up to see Senator Bible, who then called the White House and got through to Johnson. Bible said, "I have an old friend of yours here from the West."

And Johnson said, "Yeh, who?"

And Bible said, "Al Cahlan."

Johnson said, "Who's he?"

Now as close as they were when Johnson was trying to get the nomination for the Presidency of the United States and then settled for the Vice Presidency, it seems impossible to me that the man would be able to forget it, especially when he sent pictures to my brother—autographed pictures—and had sent a telegram to him when my brother was very ill. So that is what happened. Whether he did that to other people, I don't know.

But here, again, Johnson carried his political maneuvering and his political aptitude into the White House. And while he was talking about consensus, the consensus that he wanted was the same type that he got in the United States Senate. He got consensus, *or else*.

From what happened the last two years of his term as President, after Kennedy was assassinated, and the three years since he was elected on his own, in my estimation, if he had continued on and not withdrawn himself,

he might not even have been nominated and probably would have been badly defeated in the election of 1968 if he had been nominated. That's my own opinion, as I studied the trend in the political attitudes of the country. A candidate is either up, or he's down, and I think that Johnson was real down until the Sunday night that he made the speech that he was withdrawing from the race for President and that he was sacrificing his future role as President of the United States for peace in Vietnam. I think that night a President was born, because he kicked away all the political maneuvering that was such a part of him, and became a statesman. I think that if he holds to the fact that he has withdrawn from the political arena, that he will go down in history as a great President.

Pat McCarran, I think, was a great Senator from the state of Nevada. Fe became very ruthless when he got control of the Democratic party, when the bipartisan machine dropped out of the picture with Wingfield's bank failures. He was the boss—there wasn't any doubt of it—of the Democratic party, and yet, through it all, he became a very, very fine Senator for the state of Nevada and for the United States of America. McCarran was chairman of the judiciary committee. Those who know Washington understand that the judiciary committee is the most powerful because they are the ones who determine whether legislation shall be passed for any judicial or Justice Department project, or whether it shan't. Of course, every United States Senator is dependent upon what he can do for his state and his constituents, as far as establishing military installations, judicial positions, rivers and harbors and other projects. So, as a chairman of the judiciary committee, senators occupy a very, very high position in Washington circles.

And I know that McCarran on numerous occasions would call some Senator, and say,

"Senator, I understand you want so and so in your state. Well, I've got something that I want for the state of Nevada." And it was done, just like this. McCarran used his influence and his power in the Senate for the benefit of the state of Nevada and obtained numerous federal projects. The Basic Magnesium, Incorporated plant never could have been turned over to the state of Nevada if it had not been for McCarran. It was a cinch that the government was going to turn the plant over to the GSA, and cannibalize it and sell the materials for junk. But McCarran convinced them otherwise.

The same goes for Nellis Air Force Base. After World War II, Nellis Air Force Base was deactivated, and for about two years there was no activity. It was held on a standby basis with a housekeeping outfit out there to keep everything up to date. Then through McCarran's efforts, McCarran's efforts entirely, Nellis was reactivated. It was not something that was done only for the benefit of the state of Nevada, but for the United States, although Nevada was where the interest generated as far as McCarran was concerned. But now, the Nellis Air Force Base has become the most important Air Force base in the United States, in fact, in the world. And this new training center that they have put in out there will start an operation in 1969 and Nellis will expand. General Gabriel Poillon Disosway, who is head of the Tactical Air Command, which is operating Nellis Air Force Base, says that as long as there's an Air Force in the United States of America, there will be a Nellis Air Force Base. So that means that it certainly is doing something for the United States.

As far as my *personal* relationship with McCarran goes, I first knew Pat when he was an attorney in Reno. That was while I was still going to school up there. My parents had known Pat McCarran, oh, I think they

were in a lot of work together in Reno and Carson City. Pat was somewhat younger than my father, but the Cahlan family and the McCarran family have known each other for years and years. Pat McCarran's family had a ranch down on the Truckee River that is known as Patrick. They call it Patrick after the senator. My mother told me about how he was quite a sprinter—in high school and college. And then when he was graduated, he went into law in Tonopah and later in Reno.

I remember the first time that McCarran was elected. He went back to Washington, and he was determined that he was going to become a good United States Senator. Pat McCarran had a lot of faults—what I consider faults, somebody else might not consider them faults—but there isn't any way that I would ever be able to downgrade Pat McCarran. I think that, as far as I, personally, was concerned, he had always been very honest with me, and very friendly throughout all of his senatorial service in Washington. Whenever I went back to Washington, I was welcomed into Pat McCarran's office. His executive secretary, Miss Eva Adams, would always tell Pat that I was there, and he would put aside whatever he was doing and invite me in to talk to him in his inner office. I think that he was the same way with the majority of people. Pat was a very Irish type of guy; he loved everybody and loved a good drink of whiskey, loved a good story. Pat was a real man. I always thought of him as that, and I still do.

The fact of the matter is, when Pat McCarran died, Eva Adams called me and told me that the last thing that he wanted to do—or wanted to have done—was to have Al Cahlan or myself come back to Washington to go through his files to see if there was anything there that would be of any value to the newspaper. And I spent two weeks back

in Washington, going through all his files and picking out stuff that—it was not anything of state papers, or anything of that sort, but it had to do with a certain area that he had a lot of information on, and it was nothing that would be of value to anybody but us. But I did see the state papers that he had. He was known all over the United States, all over the world, for that matter. And I think he was recognized as a good United States Senator.

Pat was always alive and very highly regarded among his colleagues. All of the Senators held him in esteem as a real American first, and a citizen of the state of Nevada just about an inch below being an American, because he was fighting for the state of Nevada all the time.

Key Pittman? There was quite a guy. Probably the best story that I can tell you about Key Pittman is that one day, he came to Las Vegas and was to speak at the Rotary Club. The Rotary Club was having the Boy Scouts as their guests at the party. Well, sometime before the noon luncheon, Key apparently got with Jim Cashman and some of the rest of their cronies, and had been at the bar a little too long. When he showed up at the Rotary Club to make the speech, he got on his feet and started talking. He said that it reminded him of a racetrack, and he said, "The horse—I got the horses started, and they ran around the track, and around the track, and around the track, and around the—eh, oh, hell, I can't get 'em stopped," and sat down. The man loved his whiskey.

Another time, the story is told that Key had been lost for three or four days in Washington. Nobody knew where he was. They needed him for a very close vote on something. And about two o'clock in the afternoon, they got a call from New York City that said, "Is there somebody there looking for Key Pittman?"

Whoever it was on the other end of the wire said, "Yeh."

He said, "Well, we've found him." It was an officer of the police department in New York City who said, "We've found him. He's sitting down on the Federal Reserve Bank steps with two loaded revolvers in his lap and is just certain that somebody's gonna rob the Federal Reserve Bank, and he's gonna protect it." And he had been apparently stiff for four or five days.

When Key Pittman was sober, he had probably the greatest mind that I have ever known in my experience. He was a very likable guy; he was about six feet two or three inches tall and wore his hair in a mane in the back, much like Pat McCarran did, and he looked like a United States Senator. For Pittman's status in the United States Senate, I would suggest that anyone interested read *Nevada's Silver Key*, which is Key Pittman's biography.

Pittman was accepted as a leader of the Democratic party, and Roosevelt was one of his greatest haters. Roosevelt figured that Pittman was one of the blockades on his political road, along with McCarran.

And I'd like to say that McCarran—getting back to him—one of his greatest accomplishments was blocking the packing of the Supreme Court of the United States. Roosevelt had the idea that the Supreme Court outlawed his NRA eagle. Roosevelt, being the kind of man that he was, said that he was going to get even with the Supreme Court of the United States, and instead of nine men, he'd appoint four more and he'd appoint the kind of men who would pass his program. McCarran almost single-handedly defeated that move. Pittman was in the fight, too, but it was McCarran who single-handedly defeated the President—and to some degree drew the hatred of Roosevelt.

Roosevelt never did excuse Pat for what he did to him.

Jim Scrugham probably was one of the most interesting men that occupied a seat in the Senate and Congress, in my way of thinking. Jim started as a professor in engineering in the University of Nevada and ran for governor and was elected, and then ran for the Congress and was elected, and ran for Senator and was elected. There wasn't any great amount of, oh, accomplishment as far as Jim was concerned. Jim had a lot of respect in the United States Senate and did a lot of things for the state of Nevada. While Scrugham was governor of the state of Nevada, he was the one who first decided that Clark County was a part of the state of Nevada. And he was the one that opened up the Lost City at Overton. He had a great deal to do with the development of southern Nevada. And it was his groundwork—the groundwork that he laid—that finally brought about the construction of the north-south highway between Reno and Las Vegas. While it wasn't accomplished during his term, he laid the groundwork for it and got the job done. He was a very good friend of the southern part of the state.

Jim was a very gruff sort of a guy. He always—I don't know—he mumbled or had mush in his mouth when he talked. You couldn't understand what he was saying.

During the time that he was publisher of the *Nevada State Journal*, he never did take much interest, as I have said, much interest in the operation of the paper, although I do recall one time that he did—and I always had a lot of respect for Scrugham in this sense. When I was the editor of the *Nevada State Journal*, the son of a very prominent merchant in Reno, who, having been at a fraternity party and stinking drunk, drove his automobile, six kids in it, off the road and into a culvert and killed

one of the kids and badly injured two others. And the group of—I don't know whether it was fraternity brothers, but also—friends of the merchant, came in to talk to me and said that they wanted the story kept out of the paper—that this had happened, and wouldn't do anybody any good to publish the story, and that if the story did appear that this merchant would withdraw his advertising from the *Nevada State Journal*.

Well, I could see, even if I had been only a cub reporter, what this might mean. So I got hold of Mr. Scrugham and got him to come down to the office. And the same statement was made to him in his office. And Jim said, "If that's the way you feel about it, John, if there is an ad ready for tomorrow morning's newspaper with this merchant's name on it, you can go out to the composing room and throw it out right now, and we won't accept any further advertising from this gentleman, if this is the kind of a threat he's going to make." And he backed me up a hundred percent, and we got the story in the paper, and the guy never withdrew his advertising. And as far as I know, everybody was friendly, even though this happened. And this was the kind of a guy that Scrugham was.

He was always for you until you proved that you weren't worthy of his trust. This is the thing that I think broke Jim's heart in the Cole-Malley episode. This was the scandal on embezzlement of state funds for which Cole and Malley were convicted when Scrugham was governor. Jim trusted these guys implicitly, and they turned him around.

Then when he was defeated for governor, he had a real tough time, and I think that this is one of the reasons that he set about gathering information to publish his three-volume history of the state of Nevada. He just went into this thing with his whole heart and his mind, and that's why he didn't have

anything to do with the newspaper. It was a blow that almost crushed him, but he finally worked out of it and got elected to Congress and then to United States Senator, and did a real good job.

And Jim was a real human guy. He'd get down to the level of the people he was dealing with, whether they were presidents or bums in the gutter, he was—he knew 'em all. Certainly, this guy knew everybody in the state of Nevada because he made trips when he was governor and when he was campaigning. When anyone would go out with him on a trip, he'd say, "Oh, wait a minute. I gotta go up here to see so and so." He would drive off the main road about five or six miles, and here'd be one lone guy, and Jim'd say, "Well, I'm Jim Scrugham. I came up here to say hello to you." And he was widely known throughout the state and widely respected. As I say, he did more for southern Nevada than any other governor up to that time.

Speaking of politicians, I was in Los Angeles one night. I went to a movie theater, not knowing that Governor Fred Balzar was anywhere around. During an intermission, the then governor of California, Jimmy Rolph, appeared on the stage. He introduced his very good friend, the governor of Nevada, the Honorable Fred Balzar. Well, apparently, the two of them had been somewhere for dinner, and then had partaken of the grape to such an extent that Balzar was not in his best form—which at best was rather poor, because Balzar was not noted for being a speaker or for any great amount of education. Fred, while being a very fine guy, unfortunately did not have the education that usually is expected of a governor. And between his lack of education and his great depth of the depth of the bottle, Balzar started to make a speech. And as the governor of the state of Nevada stood on the stage, and the further he went, the further

I slipped down in my seat. Before he got through, I very easily could have crawled out on my hands and knees down the aisle, because poor Fred had just made a complete jackass of himself. This was not especially rare.

I remember another occasion during the time that the Lincoln highway Exposition was being promoted in Reno, and there had been a bunch of newspaper people at Lake Tahoe. They had come down to Reno to get some information about the Exposition, and Balzar happened to be in town. The city fathers in Reno opened a hospitality room in the emergency hospital ward in the police station. And despite the fact that it was during Prohibition, there was plenty of liquor flowing. Governor Balzar was in the midst of the entire congregation, acting as the bartender and raconteur. And some of the stories that he told certainly were not fitting for the governor's mansion or the governor's mouth, and the newspaper people went back to California with a very poor impression of Fred. I have seen him so many times do this same sort of thing.. He was just a happy-go-lucky guy that loved the position he was in and it didn't make any difference to him whether he was a good speaker or anything else. He just liked people, and people liked him—there was no doubt of it.

That brings us down to Ted Carville and the double-cross that turned into a double-double-cross. When Ted Carville was United States Attorney, he prosecuted McKay and Graham, and as such, became quite a statewide figure because this was the first time that anybody had broken in on Wingfield's empire. And Carville obtained a conviction of the two men. He then was hailed as quite a hero.

And at that time, the Democratic party was looking around for somebody to run for governor, and my brother, Al Cahlan,

decided that Ted Carville would be right at the peak of his career and could win the governorship. So my brother convinced Carville that he should run. So in putting together the campaign, I was president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in Las Vegas at the time. When Carville came down to Las Vegas, we decided that we would put together a political arm for Carville (not the Junior Chamber of Commerce *per se* because we couldn't actively engage in politics as an organization). We got several of the people in the organization to band together and form a Carville for Governor group in Las Vegas and southern Nevada. And in that group was Berkeley Bunker. We all worked quite hard for Carville down here and put together quite a campaign for him. When Carville was elected, Bunker had been a leading light of the campaign down here for Carville, because the rest of the Jaycees were fairly busy, and Bunker was pumping gas at a gas station and had more time than anybody else. So, as a result, he emerged as leader of this campaign and became quite close to Carville.

It was about that time, also, that Key Pittman was showing signs of wear as a United States Senator. On one of the visits down here to this area, Mr. Carville and my brother and Bunker got together and they decided that if Carville were elected governor, that A. E. Cahlan would be named to replace Pittman when, as, and if he died. So Carville was elected governor of the state of Nevada and took office in January, 1939.

Then on November 10, 1940, immediately after his reelection, Key Pittman, in truth, did die, and Carville had the power of appointment of a new United States Senator. Well, everybody in the Cahlan family was certain that A. E. Cahlan would be the next United States Senator. However, one night a call came down to Mr. Bunker to come to

Carson City, and when Mr. Bunker arrived in Carson City, he was named United States Senator to replace Pittman. Thereby, Mr. Carville gave Mr. A. E. Cahlan a decided kick in the pants, reneging on a promise that not only had been made, but had been reiterated several times. This provided the greatest political surprise in Nevada history. Bunker had served as assemblyman from Clark County in 1937 and 1939 sessions of the legislature, but had no other political experience and was virtually unknown in statewide politics.

So during the second term of office of Carville, Senator Scrugham also died in June, 1945, and Carville stepped down as—resigned as—governor, and Vail Pittman was elevated from lieutenant governor to governor and appointing Carville as United States Senator. In the meantime, Bunker had been defeated for reelection to the United States Senate by Scrugham and had been elected in 1945 to the House of Representatives. And when Carville's term ended in 1947 and he was up for reelection, who do you suppose filed for United States Senator on the Democratic ticket but Carville and Bunker. Bunker turned around and bit the hand that fed him. And it caused such a schism in the Democratic party that George "Molly" Malone—(Bunker beat Carville in the primaries and was in the general election) and there was such a schism in the Democratic party that Malone, a Republican, defeated Bunker and became United States Senator.

It's a strange thing about Malone. Going back to when Molly was in the University of Nevada—I knew him very well—he was a member of the SAE fraternity, and we used to be around the SAE fraternity quite a bit when I was going to grammar school and high school. Malone came to Nevada as a Federal Board man (a GI bill man he'd be called today), I

believe—I think it was—yes, I'm sure it was—and he was somewhat older than the ordinary person who was going to college.

It was I who hung the nickname of "Molly" on Malone. It came about because there used to be a baseball player of the San Francisco Seals whose name was Meloan, and they called him "Molly." So, Malone, George W. Malone, became "Molly" as far as I was concerned, and the nickname stayed with him until he died. Malone was quite an athlete. He played football for the University of Nevada and was one of the finest tackles that they've had up there for quite some time. He also was a boxer. And he won the Pacific Coast middleweight championship—amateur championship—while he was still in college. Malone carried that same pugnacious spirit with him wherever he went.

It's a sad commentary that the people of Malone's time in the Senate didn't listen to him. Because it was he who first brought up the fact that the gold was being drained out of the Fort Knox depository and was warning that sooner or later, the United States was going to be forced to face a gold shortage, and as a result, devaluation of the dollar. It was at the time when the United States was in a very high level of prosperity, and nobody paid any attention to Malone. But every time that I was around him anywhere, he would always start on this gold situation. At the time, I don't think that there was anybody who understood what Malone was talking about. But if the people had listened when Malone was promoting this gold situation, they might see that Malone was a prophet and was about twenty years ahead of his time, because he may have been. Certainly, he indicated on the floor of the Senate that he was something of a boob. He did have an engineer's ability to assess a lot of trends and a lot of things that were going on. He wasn't able to express

himself very well, and unfortunately, he didn't have a good speech writer. But Malone certainly called the turn on the gold shortage. It's too bad that Lyndon Baines Johnson didn't listen to him when Malone was popping off in the United States Senate, because he certainly was a hundred percent right.

During the time that Malone was serving in the United States Senate, there was a young man on a white horse who rode into the state of Nevada. His name was Tom Mechling. Mechling was another opportunist, who was married to the daughter of Mr. John Di Grazia in Wells. Di Grazia was quite a political figure in the Elko County area, and Mechling, as I say, had married his daughter. As a result, he, despite the fact that he had not set foot in the state of Nevada prior to the time he decided he was going to run for United States Senator, came to Nevada and immediately became the darling of all the left-wingers in the state of Nevada. Mechling was about as far out as anybody could get at that time.

But the young man certainly knew how to campaign. He knew that he was going to have to run in the primary against Bible, who at that time was enjoying quite a bit of popularity. So Mechling hitched his trailer up to his automobile—which was a very early model of automobile—and played the poor mouth in making his trips around the state of Nevada. He made every nook and cranny in the state of Nevada, and I think, probably—he claimed, and probably did—shake hands with every voter in the state of Nevada. Where Mechling got his money, nobody was ever sure. It was never proved, but it was believed at the time that he was being supported by a lot of left wing organizations out of the East.

As I say, Mechling made a very, very determined campaign in the state of Nevada, and Bible, while he was not complacent, didn't do as much campaigning as Mechling did.

As a result, Mechling won the Democratic nomination for Senator. Shortly after the results were announced, Pat McCarran made the statement that he was deserting the Democratic party to campaign for and vote for Molly Malone as United States Senator, and let the word go out that the Democrats were to dump Mechling, which they very definitely did. Malone was reelected to the United States Senate, thereby capitalizing twice on the splits in the Democratic party. I think that, had it not been for these splits, Malone probably never would have been United States Senator. He was in the right place at the right time, and became Senator.

There is no logical explanation for Mechling's popularity. I don't know who it was that dubbed him the "white knight," but this is the sort of a campaign he carried on. He was to be the savior of the state of Nevada, but he didn't quite know what he was going to save. Mechling did quite a lot of homework on the history of Nevada, but when it came down to the home-grown native of Nevada, Mechling wasn't quite as well informed as he should have been. Of course, recall that at about that time, the southern part of the state was growing quite rapidly, and there were a lot of new people who were coming into this area. And they had no attachments as far as the Democratic or the Republican party were concerned, or even didn't know the candidates personally, like most of the people of the state of Nevada do know their political figures. so his brand of snake oil was salable, and certainly, he did sell it.

I can't tell you why most of the newspapers were for Mechling. Certainly, the *Review-Journal* was not, because we had some pipelines back into Washington, and into New York—we knew the type of a guy Mechling was and knew that he was not the kind of a person that we would want to

represent the state of Nevada, so we definitely opposed him. Of course, we had always been favorable to Bible when he was running for attorney general—and when he was in the Senate. And we weren't going to turn our backs on Bible for an unknown carpetbagger who came to the state of Nevada, as I say, to sell his snake oil. He did a very fine job on snowing some editors of the papers in the state of Nevada. Reno papers were for him; I believe "Snowy" Monroe was for him out in Elko. And apparently, it was just one of those things that the—some of the—people of the state of Nevada decided that they needed a change, and they thought here was a real fine upstanding young man.

Later developments as regard Mechling don't indicate that he was quite the shining "white knight" that he claimed to be in riding the white horse, because he got himself mixed up down in California with a textbook deal down there, and darn near wound up in jail. I've forgotten whether he was indicted, or what happened. But anyway, it was quite a scandal down there—the textbook deal, and Mechling was right in the middle of it. And he left the West Coast after he got mixed up in that textbook scandal and he went back East, and I haven't heard of him since. I don't know what he's doing, even. There was an article in the paper here several months ago, but I've forgotten what he's doing. He came back into the picture some way. That was the story of Tom Mechling and his white horse.

Did Senator McCarran discuss with me his feelings on endorsing Malone? Oh, yes. I mean as far as McCarran was concerned, he knew Mechling's background, and he said, "While I have never in my life supported a Republican for a partisan office," he said, "I am just going to have to turn my back on the Democratic party because of Mechling. I know Mechling's background; I know that

the man isn't to be trusted if he gets into the United States Senate; he will not be a Senator from the state of Nevada." I say these are the things McCarran told me. I'm not making statements of my own. But he said that he just wouldn't be able to work with Mechling in the United States Senate because he knew the kind of a guy he was, and if McCarran started in working with a man like Mechling, he, McCarran, would lose all the prestige that he had in the United States Senate. So he just backed off. That's—it was just that bad. McCarran supplied us with quite a lot of information on Mechling that was used during the campaign.

As I say, Mechling was an opportunist who admitted that there were three states that he would try for election to the United States Senator's chair; one of them was Nevada, one was Montana, and the other one was Wyoming. And he settled on Nevada because his father-in-law lived here.

Have I ever discussed this with Mr. Di Grazia? You can't discuss Tom Mechling with Di Grazia and get any answers! Because Di Grazia became very incensed at everybody because his son-in-law was defeated for United States Senate. Anybody that opposed Tom Mechling in Di Grazia's mind was completely out of his skull. And as I say, Mechling was defeated, and Di Grazia saw that his defeat was effected by Democrats jumping over the fence, one by one, away from Mechling, Di Grazia's son-in-law, Di Grazia, having done all he had for the Democratic party, then became highly incensed, and as I say, you couldn't get an answer from Di Grazia. I never tried to talk to him about it after the first encounter I had with him, and I found out that you couldn't get a competent answer—I don't mean by that that the man was off his rocker, but I mean, his answers certainly were all colored by the fact that Mechling was his son-in-law. And

he took the defeat probably a lot harder than Mechling himself did. I think Di Grazia has quit working for the Democratic party, but I don't know. Don't think he does a thing. That is the story as regards Mechling and the splits in the Democratic party.

But getting into the present day Senators. On the senatorial level, Bible was conditioned to be a United States Senator by Pat McCarran. And Bible is a very intelligent person, very articulate, and has the respect of the people of the United States Senate. Bible is one of the—I guess you could call—poverty people when he was growing up; he had to work for everything he has, and work hard. He became a leader while he was in the University of Nevada and carried that leadership on as a district attorney and attorney general, and finally, as a United States Senator.

Howard Cannon was more or less of an opportunist. Cannon got into the United States Senate during another split in the Democratic party. In 1957 he was city attorney of Las Vegas, when he traveled up to the capitol in Carson City, intending to file as a candidate for attorney general. I had talked to him just before he left to fly up to Reno, and he said, "I'm goin' up to file for attorney general." On the steps of the capitol, he met Jack Conlon, who was one of the most astute politicians in this part of the country. And Conlon convinced him that he should file for United States Senate. He changed his mind then and did file for United States Senate and won.

Cannon is a very likable sort of a guy. I've known Cannon ever since he first came to this area. And in fact, he and his wife, the former Dorothy Pace of Alamo, were married in the living room of my mother-in-law and father-in-law's (Mr. and Mrs. Burley M. Jones) home on Thirteenth Street, Las Vegas, and the ceremony was performed by my brother-

in-law, Clifford A. Jones, who was Clark County District Judge in 1946 and qualified to perform marriages. They have been very close for a long period of time.

As far as Cannon is concerned, he is, I think, an ordinary United States Senator—I don't think he'll ever do anything spectacular, but you'll always know that Cannon is back there. Cannon has been guided very successfully by Conlon, who was his administrative assistant, and there is no more astute politician in Washington, unless it's Lyndon B. Johnson, than Jack Conlon. Undoubtedly, it was Conlon who selected the Armed Services Committee for Cannon to serve on and also the NASA.

In that atmosphere, Cannon has been able to do a great deal for the southern part of the state of Nevada. He's been very active in the development of the nuclear weapons of the Atomic Energy Commission test site and has been very active in seeing that the Nellis Air Force Base is taken care of in a manner that is favorable to the southern part of the state of Nevada. As I say, I don't think Cannon will ever be a great leader in the Senate, but he won't be a nothing like some of the people that I could talk about in the Lower House. But I think that he is a good man.

When Cannon went back to the United States Senate, one of the first people that Jack Conlon met was Bobby Baker. And being sort of kindred souls, they were immediately attracted to each other. At that time, Bobby Baker was the secretary to the majority leader of the Senate, Mr. Lyndon B. Johnson, and in such a position had all the power and prestige that goes with that office. I knew Bobby personally—met him several times. I met him both in Las Vegas and in Washington, D. C. And Bobby Baker was a politician's politician, because he knew where the bodies were buried, and as a result, he was Lyndon's right-hand

man in the United States Senate because it was Bobby Baker who knew where every vote was in the United States Senate. I think that Bobby just became too big for his breeches and took advantage of a lot of people who didn't know any better. And I think that as far as Cannon personally was concerned, I don't think that he was linked into Bobby Baker *per se*, any further than Jack Conlon linked him.

It was Jack Conlon who was the close associate of Bobby Baker. I was back in Washington one time, and I think that Jack Conlon probably knew as many key club operators in Washington, D. C. as Bobby Baker did. Because at one—in one evening, we went out to about five key clubs in Washington, and everybody greeted Jack Conlon like he was the President of the United States. So he knew these swinging people, and it was Jack Conlon and Bobby Baker who were close friends, and not Cannon.

Don't misunderstand me, Cannon, I am sure, knew Bobby Baker. When they had a testimonial dinner for Cannon in Las Vegas, Bobby Baker reportedly arranged for a plane load of congressmen and senators to fly out for the dinner. As I say, I think that Cannon, at that time, was not an astute politician. Cannon was a little dazed by the glamour of the fact that he was United States Senator and wasn't—didn't inquire into the methods or the madness of people like Bobby Baker. He let Conlon do that. I think, as far as Cannon is concerned, he was caught in a trap not of his own making. That doesn't excuse the man because he certainly was responsible for Conlon's acts, but as far as wrongdoing is concerned, I don't think that Cannon had any idea that there was anything wrong.

The guy that I blame for the whole deal was Lyndon Johnson, because Lyndon Johnson just ran off and left Bobby Baker like he had cut off his right arm. And you're

either a loyal guy or a disloyal guy. You can always say that, sure, the guy was charged with making a mistake, and I'll stand by him until he's proven guilty. And he just ran off and left him and said, "I didn't have anything to do with Bobby Baker after I got out of the United States Senate and became President." So that's the answer.

As far as Walter Baring is concerned in the Congress, the less said about him, the better. He is a poor man that was elected because of his poverty and has been there so many years by the mere fact that he has done many things for "little people." And there isn't anything that he won't do for "the voters," and as somebody said, "There isn't anybody that likes Walter Baring but the voters," which is very definitely so, because he's reelected time after time after time.

Going back to the governors, I find that I have neglected to say anything about the Vail Pittman, the Charles Russell, and the Grant Sawyer administration.

Vail Pittman was a gentle roan. He was a typical Southern gentleman and most of his adult life was lived in the shadow of his more illustrious brother, Key. However, Vail came on fast in the later years of his life and provided the state of Nevada with an excellent regime while he was governor.

I was a very close friend of Vail's, having been in almost constant association with him while he was publisher of the *Ely Daily Times*. We consulted each other on newspaper problems and I came to know and respect him through these meetings.

I don't know that Vail Pittman was a spectacular governor, but he certainly was a satisfactory one. It was during his term of office that the basis for the future development of the Las Vegas Valley was established.

He, Al Cahlan, and Clifford A. Jones, the then lieutenant governor, formed an alliance

with Senator Pat McCarran which brought about the salvation of the Basic Magnesium plant. John Mueller, a Reno resident, with Al Cahlan, a member of the Colorado River Commission, joined the group and together they stalled the cannibalization of the Basic plant and bought it for one dollar. That was the first industrial development by the state of Nevada in history and it turned out to be a good one. Later this same group brought in the industrial plants which now are operating in Henderson and the payroll which goes with them.

Vail Pittman had strong ties in southern Nevada and was the first governor, outside of Jim Scrugham, who did much for the development of this region. He served his state well.

As far as Charlie Russell is concerned, nobody will ever be able to criticize the man because, in my estimation, he didn't do anything wrong, and he didn't do anything right. lie didn't do anything, period. He went through eight years of very smooth sailing—didn't upset the boat or upset the applecart, or anything. However, it was during his regime that the Tax Commission took over the gambling supervision. The legislature set up the Tax Commission as the watchdog over the gambling industry, and Robbins Cahill was appointed as its director. Cahill was probably the boss of the Tax Commission—not probably, but was the boss of the Tax Commission. Charlie Russell didn't have much to do because he placed his entire faith in Cahill.

I knew Charlie Russell ever since the two of us went to school together at the University of Nevada. And Charlie's career as governor was much like his career at the University— unspectacular. He was a plodder; he was honest as far as I could tell. I have never had any proof that he was

otherwise, and I'll always defend him as far as a person is concerned. Personally, I don't think he was a good governor, but he wasn't a *bad* governor. I'd say he was very ordinary, like followed people like Pittman, colorful people—Scrugham, Carville, Pittman—all colorful people, and Charlie had the color of a white paper sack. But as I say, he was not spectacular, but he wasn't a good governor, he wasn't a bad governor. The state of Nevada got along very well during his terms, and he was reelected, so the people must've liked him. I was not especially close to Charlie Russell as regards his administration. I wasn't up at the legislature during the time that he was governor, except the last couple years, I think, he was governor.

As far as Sawyer is concerned, I think that Sawyer probably was one of the best governors that the state has had since—maybe—Scrugham. There is one thing about Grant, that he was very personable, and he learned to handle newspaper people and TV men, radio people very well, and get the image of the state of Nevada that we all would like to have put over to the TV, radio, and newspaper people.

I saw this very definitely when we were on trips for SNIF (Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation). He was with us one time in Denver. And something had happened in the state of Nevada—I've forgotten what it was—maybe it was something on skimming, or something of that nature, but anyway, it was detrimental to the state of Nevada. And we had set up this press conference for the TV people and the radio and the newspaper people, where Sawyer was to appear for a press conference by himself.

So he walked into the room where the television cameras were and said, "I guess we're ready to go. We'd better have them ask some questions." And some of the questions that they asked him were really loaded. I mean

they could have been answered any way, and he could have been wrong. But Sawyer passed it off and said, "Now, really, you don't expect me to answer that question, do you? You've loaded the question, and I'm just going to load it right back at you." And he'd parry back and forth, and these people respected him. And evidently, he had the respect of the various governors in the United States, because of the fact that he was elected chairman and president of the Governors' Conference.

I thought that the first couple years of Sawyer's regime in Carson City were horrible. Some of the appointments he made were just appalling to anybody that was a politician. Undoubtedly, these appointments were made on a political basis, and not for ability. And he had himself surrounded with some of these men, the lousiest assistants that any governor has had.

And the first two years that he was in the capitol, he couldn't stand criticism. Somebody'd criticize him, and he'd just jump up and down and off the ceiling, and took it as a personal affront to himself. He was not an experienced politician when he went into the governor's office. When he came out, he certainly was, and he learned this in eight years that he was in the governor's office.

I was very close to Grant Sawyer. When he was running for nomination, he came into the *Review-Journal* office, and I sat him in my office and—for, oh, half an hour—and talked to him, and told him that if there was any way that I could help him that I would be very happy to do so, but it wasn't possible for me to go overboard for him in the newspaper in The primary. If he won the primary, then he should come in and see me, and we would map out a program for him in southern Nevada. Well, after he won the primary, he came down, and I helped him to a great degree—I mean, I don't say I helped him, I

advised him, and I got real well acquainted with Sawyer. And when he became governor, I was in the governor's mansion at his invitation on many occasions.

During the Silver Centennial at Virginia City (on which I served as a committee member), when Vice President Richard Nixon and his wife and two daughters, Julie and Patricia, were there for the celebration, Governor Sawyer asked me and my wife to come over to the reception that was being held for Nixon and his wife. We went over to the Miners Hall and met the Nixons and Their two children. Then there was—that evening—there was a dinner to be given by Howard Eells in Reno. (Eells, of Cleveland, was founder of the Basic Magnesium, Incorporated plant at Henderson, and owner of mining property at Gabbs.) And the governor asked if we were going, and we said, "Yes," and he asked if we would care if they came along with us. So we rode in the limousine from Virginia City down to the governor's mansion while Grant and Bette changed clothes, and then they drove us in to the Holiday Hotel in Reno, and they waited for us while we changed clothes. We went to the Jordan Crouch home for cocktails and then went out to Eugene's where the Eells were giving this very nice dinner party, and we had a very nice evening.

During Sawyer's first inaugural speech, I became enamored with his daughter, Gail, who at that time was about—oh, I guess, eight or ten years old. (Let's see, oh, I guess she was about eight years old, 'cause she's in college now.) She was a very cute youngster, and I wrote a column about her, and of course the Sawyers were very happy about that. All during the time that they were in the mansion, I visited them on many occasions, and Gail was always thrilled to see me, and I was always thrilled to see her. She was very—as I say, a very nice little girl. And this last winter, the

Sawyers gave a cocktail party at their home, and Gail was there, and I remembered her, although she was grown up. She is now a sophomore in college, and she's grown up, and I hardly recognized her. She remembered how I had written a column about her, and this was the first recognition she had ever gotten. She was very happy about it—a very nice kid. Grant and I have been friends ever since he was elected governor of the state. And as I say, he appointed me executive director of the Centennial Commission, for which I was very appreciative.

As far as Sawyer's term was concerned, I think he did a lot of constructive work for the state of Nevada. It was he who called the meeting of the gambling casino people to determine what was wrong with the gambling enforcement agency, and whether it should be separated from the state Tax Commission. And I was called in as one of the consultants at that meeting. And as a result of that meeting, a bill was drafted setting up the Gaming Commission. The bill was put together by Howard McKissick and Harry Swanson, and I was very proud of the fact that they consulted me on the development of that bill. I think some of the suggestions that I made were incorporated. I don't have any pride of authorship in the bill because it wasn't mine, but I did at least have some little part in putting the measure together.

Sawyer—his reorganization of the state government was a real fine idea, only it wasn't carried far enough. Unfortunately, the thing got into politics. While it was supposed to reduce the bureaucratic phase in Carson City, it didn't serve that purpose at all, because it developed into a larger bureaucratic outfit than it was before. However, it was a step. And it's unfortunate that the politics in the governor's mansion have changed from Democratic to Republican—I say it is unfortunate because

of the fact that this reorganization could be developed a lot further in my estimation, and could save the people of the state of Nevada a lot of money.

Looking over Sawyer's record, I think he was a good governor. Perhaps history will say that he was an outstanding governor; I don't think so, because, after all, Sawyer did make a lot of mistakes while he was in the governor's office, as I have said before. However, you don't measure a person by the mistakes he makes, you measure him by whether he has learned by his mistakes. And I think that Sawyer very definitely did learn by his mistakes, and by the time he got out of the governor's office, he was prepared to do a very fine job. It's unfortunate that he didn't have the same preparation at the start of his gubernatorial terms as he did when he got through, because he would have been, I'm sure, an outstanding governor.

I have high hopes for Paul Laxalt. I think that Paul is very interested in the future of the state of Nevada; in fact, I am convinced that he is. Paul is making the same kind of mistakes that Sawyer and, I guess, every governor that's been in has made. He's made some very bad appointments, rather like Sawyer. Rather than for ability, he has named some people for political expediency. And I think that he has learned. And as I say, I am certain that Paul Laxalt has the best interests of the state of Nevada at heart, and will be that way as long as he is governor of the state of Nevada.

In assessing the governors all the way along that I have known, from Sparks to Laxalt, each one has contributed something to the state of Nevada—some moral development. Jim Scrugham probably was the man who discovered southern Nevada. Balzar, in his own fumbling way, did some things; I think that it was during his term that the divorce law

was passed. And I'm sure that it was Balzar's term that gambling was legalized.

But anyway, Balzar—a man can't spend four years or eight years as governor of the state of Nevada and not do some good. As I say, some are worse than others. I think, fortunately, in the state of Nevada, we have chosen leaders who were able to lead. Not only in the governor's office, but in the Senators' offices, and I think that the general run of senators—United States Senators from the state of Nevada, have been, well, a whole lot better than any other state in the Union. We haven't produced outstanding leaders like some of the other states have, but at least the majority of our Senators were well respected in the houses of Congress.

It seems inevitable that the Democratic party will split, and what happens in the future, nobody knows. You have a Democratic county convention down in Las Vegas which is never anything but a real riot. The Democrats in Clark County could control the state of Nevada if they'd ever stay together. They've had every opportunity to stay together and blown it, every one of them. I have attended conventions all over the state—both Democratic and Republican—and at every state convention, the Clark County delegation splits not only one way, but probably three or four ways, and everybody is fighting for power and control of the convention. And it's beyond me that, when they get control, what have they got control of? Nothing. And it seems to me that they're fighting windmills when they have started in fighting for control of the county Democratic area. You've got many splinter groups in the Clark County delegation, and they are very violent and very vehement. You've got the civil rights people, you've got the labor people, you've got the Cannon people, you've got the Bible people, you've got the Sawyer people—and when

you start splitting any party that way, you've got a split—high, wide, and handsome. So until Clark County Democrats get the idea that they're going to get a little unity and a little harmony down there, they're not going to control anything. They'll never elect a governor form down here until such time as they do get some unity.

This last convention, as far as Clark County was concerned, it was something that nobody anticipated. Everything was supposed to be all right and all greased when they went up to the convention in Reno. Herbert M. "Herb" Jones was on one side of the fence as national committeeman, and Grant Sawyer, as ex-governor, was on the other side. Sawyer was determined to have Bert Rose elected state chairman. The Jones people—Jones being a national committeeman—the Jones people were willing to concede Bert Rose for state chairman, if Jones could be reelected national committeeman. At a meeting several months before the convention, Sawyer said he was not interested in the national committeeman, and that he would support Jones. When they got to the convention in Reno, Sawyer said, "All bets off. I withdraw my commitment to you," and set about going after the national committee job. Three times, the Jones group deferred to Sawyer on the state chairmanship and supported Rose in face of three other nominations that were made. And Rose was elected. Sawyer again reiterated his deal that he did not want the national committeeman, but that he would accept a draft. So the word went out with Dean "Diamondtooth" Miller carrying the word to all the delegates that Sawyer would accept a draft. And at the time when the election was coming down to the nubbin, it was snowing in Reno and people were either interested in getting home and getting a plane out before the snow closed the airport, or else they were interested in going

to the Sonny Liston fight. That is, the delegates from Las Vegas—or southern Nevada. And when the showdown came, the Jones faction came up short. They didn't have enough votes, and so they got beat.

So there is bitterness in the party now. Whether this will affect the Fike-Bible battle for the United States Senate, who knows? But a look back at the past history of the—maybe the past casts a shadow as to what might happen this fall. I don't know how deep the schism is, or whether the state of Nevada, the northern part of the state, will go for having two United States Senators from Clark County. I don't think that the rest of the state will even consider that, and I think that the Republicans in the north will turn against Fike and go for Bible. Because I don't think that their party commitment is such that they will feel that two Senators from Clark County is a good thing for the state of Nevada. I'm sure that a lot of Republicans in Clark County are going to feel the same way. This is not to downgrade Fike as a contender, but there are a lot of people in the state that I have talked to personally that feel that Fike is going to run in a fast race, because having been elected to the assembly, then jumping from the assembly to lieutenant governor and from lieutenant governor to candidate for United States Senate in the short space of about four years is running a little too fast. There's one thing the people of the state of Nevada have always demanded, and that is that their candidates prove themselves before they are elected to office.



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## THE SOUTHERN NEVADA INDUSTRIAL FOUNDATION: A NEW CAREER

Before we conclude this, I would like to say something about Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation, of which I am the managing director, and have been for the last three years. The Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation was formed in 1954 when the image of the city of Las Vegas and southern Nevada was very poor. An article in the *Wall Street Journal*, which pictured Las Vegas about as badly as the *Green Felt Jungle* did, spurred a group of local people—utility owners, financial people, and people of that sort, to form the Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation in an effort to change the image of this area. They planned to go to the people in the financial areas of the United States and show them that all the people in Las Vegas didn't wear green aprons with green eyeshades over horns that grew out of their heads.

So it was decided to go back to New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Houston, Denver, and Cleveland, and areas of that type where financial transactions were taking place. At that time, the bond issues in the city of Las Vegas and in Clark County, and I think

probably in the state as well, were up to the limit. We couldn't sell bonds on the market for less than five percent interest, and that was the highest allowed by state law.

So the first trip that the Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation made was to New York City. They invited the bonding people, stock exchange people, financial people, insurance people and so forth, to meet around luncheon tables—after having a couple of cocktails before lunch. At every table, there was at least one and possibly two people from southern Nevada, to talk to the guests—to host the people—at that table. The governor of the state made a speech about what the state of Nevada had to offer, and the president of the Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation told what southern Nevada had to offer. And as a result of that visit and the subsequent one that was made to Chicago, the bond interest rate fell to 3.8, which is quite a drop and saved the state of Nevada and Clark County School District here quite a lot of money in interest. And that was one of the main accomplishments of SNIF in its early years.

SNIF members have, of course, kept their eyes out for possible industry that might be expanding to the West and have had some very good contacts, but not so many actual accomplishments in bringing industry in here. However, under the tax situation that the state of Nevada has, compared to that of, let's say California, we are in a very favorable position to get a lot of the development. In Nevada, we don't have any inventory tax and we don't have any personal income tax in the state (how long this will last, I don't know, but we now are in a favorable position).

One of the handicaps that southern Nevada has had with attracting industry into the state is the fact that freight rates are very unfavorable. We have a "one railroad" town here. In the past, the Union Pacific Railroad has not been too interested, over the long run, in the future of Las Vegas. As a result, we are back in the archaic days of where we're fighting the long-short haul freight rates, which means that anybody that is shipping goods from the East Coast to Las Vegas has to pay the freight rates from here to Los Angeles, and from Los Angeles back to Las Vegas. And anybody with any brains knows that this sort of freight rates is going to kill you.

However, Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation took the lead about a year ago in a fight to do something about the freight rates. At the present time, we have about come all the way in forming the Nevada Freight Association, which is a cooperative shippers' association, which has been assured by the Union Pacific that we will get equitable freight rates into the city of Las Vegas both from Los Angeles and from the East Coast.

Of course, from Los Angeles, the problem that we have as far as Las Vegas is concerned, or as far as southern Nevada is concerned, is that everything is being shipped in, and comparatively little is being shipped out.

Of course, the plants at Henderson do ship products and materials from their plants out there. But the volume is such that loaded carloads arrive in Las Vegas, then the car has to go back empty.

Now, if there is a possibility that we do get these freight rates set up and can bring industry in here because of the tax situation, we are going to have a much more favorable deal regarding freight rates. Plants producing goods here would be able to load freight cars here and send their goods down to Los Angeles on a return trip instead of piggyback trucks and freight cars going back to Los Angeles empty. So that is one thing that we hope will, in the future, do a tremendous amount of good for southern Nevada.

We have received a number of—I say a number—hundreds of inquiries over the past three years, regarding expansion in the future—companies that are looking around for location. It's an axiom in the industrial development field that smokestacks don't grow in the community overnight. Usually, from the first contact with any company, even if they are definitely decided that they are coming into an area, it is anywhere from three to five years before a new plant is put into production.

It begins to look more and more like we'll be getting some new industry in here. Certainly the advent of Howard Hughes has not done the southern part of the state of Nevada any harm because wherever anybody goes he is asked: "What's Hughes going to do in Las Vegas besides buying up hotels?" There isn't anybody except Hughes himself who knows what Hughes is going to do, and he doesn't talk to anybody outside his own chosen circle. He keeps his own confidence and usually about the only people who know what he's going to do are the four secretaries he has up in the seventh floor of the Desert

Inn, and they just don't talk. It is, to me, quite apparent that whatever he does is going to be done in the field of aviation because he is not buying the two airports in Las Vegas just to have money invested in the community. He's going to do something that will need a landing field.

His plan for the SST jet plane airport is something that the future is going to have to tell. There isn't any doubt in the world but what the SST is going to change the travel patterns of the entire world because you'll be able to take off from Paris, for instance, and get to Los Angeles in about four hours, and that's pretty quick travel. The SST, as everybody knows, has a very bad noise problem of sonic booms and so forth. And everybody is saying that the planes will not be able to fly over any inhabited areas, which to most people, means flying over the ocean. Well, if you will take a look at the "great circle" route which goes over the North Pole, you can see that you can fly from anywhere, any European continent, over the North Pole, and into Las Vegas without hitting any inhabited area. You'd be coming in over Alaska, over the uninhabited areas of Canada, down through Montana—the wide open spaces of Montana—and into Las Vegas. This is really going to mean something to the city of Las Vegas when the SST and any future jet propulsion, or rocket propulsion vehicles are put into use.

No telling what's going to happen as far as this air travel is concerned, because rocket-propelled planes will be able to leave New York City and get into Los Angeles in half an hour, and this is really something! So the future is certainly very bright, and SNIF is laying the foundation for the future of southern Nevada.

When the Atomic Energy Commission made a request for sites for the huge linear accelerator cyclotron in the United States, Las

Vegas presented a site out in Eldorado Valley, about thirty miles southeast of Las Vegas. The site was in the last eighteen at least, and we understood that it was in the last five. The one reason that Las Vegas—the Las Vegas area—was not considered further was because of the lack of higher education facilities here. Had we had a university which granted doctorate degrees in the sciences, I'm sure that we would have received more consideration. As it was, Weston, Illinois, got the accelerator. Weston did not want it. The land is a little crowded there, but it is in the center of an educational complex that is very good. It's right outside the city of Chicago and Northwestern, the University of Chicago, Michigan University, and all of these state universities which have been in operation for many, many years. This made the difference. And we are sure that had we had better facilities here, we would have made it.

There's one thing that SNIF is determined to do, and that is to integrate the tourist industry into any industry that is brought in here. By that, I mean we are not trying to attract any smokestack industry into this area. It's light manufacturing that we want, like electronics or perhaps, clothing manufacturing, or something of that sort that is clean and has a high-class labor pool. We don't want to interfere with the clear atmosphere that we have in the city of Las Vegas and all over the southern part of the state any more than it has been interfered with now. And this is the thing that we're trying to do, and as a result, we're somewhat limited in attracting industry in the state.

What kinds of questions do people ask us besides about the educational facilities? Did they ask you about racial problems and this sort of thing, too? Oh, not as much as you would expect. They want to know what type education facilities are available for their

children, how the schools in southern Nevada rate with the schools, say, where they came from, or schools in Los Angeles or Chicago. And according to the NEA, whose figures we quote, Nevada stands very high on the list as far as secondary educational facilities are concerned. Clark County rates very high. Of course, the university level is as it is, but it will get better, and I'm sure that, within, oh, by the year 2000, the Nevada Southern University will be larger than the University of Nevada. It's only natural, because this area is growing faster than Reno is growing.

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## “CAHLAN SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM”

In reading over this narrative, I find that I have skipped some very important parts of my life. In order to correct the oversight, I will add some odds and ends as they come to mind.

First off, I should tell a little something about the Block N, as it almost was a second home to me while I was going to high school and college. The Block N was a pool hall and snack bar which served the high schoolers and collegians during the middle twenties. It was here that I learned to shoot pool and become somewhat expert, if I do say so. Of course, I never was in the class of Bert Gibbons or “Dinty” Moore, but could hold my own with the rest of the clan.

It was here that a lot of my money went—money that I earned at Fred Strassburg’s cigar store which I tended after school and in the mornings before school. I used to go to work at six o’clock, clean out the spittoons, sweep the floor, and open the store just before Mr. Strassburg came. He was a kindly old German man who, in my younger days, used to manufacture cigars in a little store on the

east side of Virginia Street about two doors south from Commercial Row. The store in which I worked was across the street from his original one in the spot recently occupied by the Southworth Cigar Store. The money I got from Mr. Strassburg was invested on most occasions on the Kelly pool numbers, and the games went on all afternoon and many times into the late hours of the night.

Dick Sheehy presided over the pool hail and saw to it that we customers behaved ourselves in the hail, and, if we got in trouble outside the hall, he was our father confessor and advisor. He was a very good friend of my father, so I was one of his special projects. He kept me out of a lot of trouble that I might have gotten into otherwise.

The lunch counter up front served the best roast beef sandwiches I ever tasted, and whenever possible, I used to go to the Block N for a sandwich and chocolate malt. In the wintertime, they used to serve shrimp and oyster cocktails, and they tasted pretty good when we came in off a snow-laden street for lunch.

It was here, too, that I started the first football pool the world has ever known. It was in the middle twenties while I was going to college. I had a big board up on the wall across the aisle from the lunch counter and the board had twenty football teams on it. Each had a number. As the Saturdays progressed, each team had a different opponent, of course, so the guys who bought chances had a different set of choices. They made their choice by rolling out one of the balls from the Kelly pool bottle. For instance, if California was playing Stanford, California would be number ten and Stanford maybe number two. If the Kelly pool ball rolled was a "two," the guy had Stanford; if it was "ten," it was California. There were twenty games on the list, so for a quarter, the bettor got ten teams. The one who had the most winners won the pot, minus ten percent for old John. The thing worked pretty well for the first month or two, and then three guys came up with the same number of winners and the banker went broke. End of football pool, end of old John.

It was in the Block N that I met Willie Hoppe, the longtime billiard champion, and his closest competitor, Willie Mosconi. The latter taught us high school kids some trick shots which even now I can duplicate, although my pool playing days have been long gone.

I should have told also about my ball playing career. Started playing baseball as a small boy in Carson City and then transferred this activity to the old Humphrey's lot on Sierra Street in Reno. As I grew up, I became something of a baseball player, captaining the Reno high school team in my senior year.

I enrolled at the University of Nevada in 1920 and went to Elko for the summer of 1921 and played several games for the Elko team. I was hitting pretty good and fielding

so well the manager said I was his permanent second baseman. I was working in the Mason Dairy, washing bottles as a part-time job and collecting ten dollars a game on Sunday. That arrangement didn't last too long because I got terribly lovesick and went back to Reno where my beloved was going to summer school. It was a bum move because about two weeks after I got back to Reno, my dear one gave me back my fraternity pin and told me to get lost.

I didn't get lost, however. I started driving taxi for the old University Taxi Company, operated by Johnny Harrison and Tom Middleton, two U of N students. My taxi driving pals were the two Harrison boys, Leslie "Spud" and John, and Jimmy Bradshaw and Bevo Colwell. I lasted at that until September and then went down to Richmond, California, where I went to work for the Standard Oil Company. I have already told about the experiences there.

In 1926, when I was graduated from college, two fraternity brothers and I went to Elko to play with the Elko baseball team. They were Fred Barnum and Don Dakin. Barnum was a pitcher and Dakin was a second baseman. I was catching. This season also ended with a lovesick child who returned to Reno and later went to Oakland to be with my darling. So you see, my baseball career was pretty well spoiled when the love bug hit me.

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I have discussed the early days of the *Review-Journal* in preceding pages, but it seemed to me after reading it that perhaps I should tell just how the newspaper developed. Just at the time I came to Las Vegas in 1929, the newspaper had progressed from a weekly to a biweekly and then to a tri-weekly which

were steps that were not too long nor too hard to accomplish. However, going from a tri-weekly to a daily caused problems.

One of the first breaks I got when I came to Las Vegas as editor was when the *Las Vegas Age*, which was then owned by C. P. "Pop" Squires, dropped the NEA syndicate. The NRA was (and still is, I guess) the finest syndicate company in the business. It provides a newspaper with comics, serial stories, cartoons, editorials and practically everything which a daily newspaper the size of the *Review-Journal* (then) could use. I am sure the present operation includes the NEA service.

Anyway, it certainly was exactly what I needed to make the *Review-Journal* into a daily. We usually put out a six-page paper daily. The first page, of course, was the one with all the news on it. Page two was reserved for jump stories (stories that were continued from page one) and personals. Page three usually was a "crap" page where anything and everything was placed. Page four was usually the sports page, page five the classified, and page six would be the last page down and would be filled with legal notices, late classified, and stuff of that sort.

My brother, Al, and I had the same ideas when it came to putting together a newspaper. We both felt that if we were to satisfy the subscribers, we had to give them something to read that was both interesting and informative. As a result, we gradually worked an editorial page into the format. Al wrote the editorials, which usually were on local subjects and were real hard-hitting without being biased (something you can't find now in the local newspapers); and then, shortly after I came down he started writing his column "From Where I Sit," which proved to be the most popular feature from the first day it was published until the day he died.

Then we latched onto the Drew Pearson column because it was about this time that his *Washington Merry-Go-Round* (the book) was published. Pearson at that time (this was before he became a Washington messiah) was a real good reporter and exposed a lot of things that were happening in the capitol. (It is unfortunate that Pearson's ego got the better of him, because he could have been a great contributor to the future of our nation. But he got so impressed with himself that he figured he was bigger than any president and was sitting on Roosevelt's right hand. Of course, Roosevelt sat at the right hand of God.)

Then because Pearson was at one end of the pipe, we figured we should have someone for the people at the other end of the pipe to read, so we contracted for Westbrook Pegler's column. So we had one guy on the left, another on the right, and then my brother, Al, in between. So our paper got all opinions to satisfy everyone who read it (we hoped).

In those early days, as I was the entire news staff, it was pretty easy to set a policy and stick to it. We tried to write our stories so they would answer all the questions— who, what, why, when, and where—and never color our stories in the news columns. We figured that if somebody wanted to read our views on any subject they could turn to the editorial pages. And we tried to cover the entire local scene completely so that if a citizen heard a siren scream in the middle of the night, he could find out why in the next afternoon's paper. Lots of times I have stayed up half the night in order to get a story into the newspaper the next afternoon. Hours didn't mean a thing to us. We stayed with a story until it was all wrapped up—none of this stuff of cutting out at five o'clock if there was something hot on the fire.

And we had the complete confidence of the city, county, state and federal officials.

We NEVER broke a confidence, unless we got the information from some other source after the original source had told us about it. As a result, we never were barred from any meeting, and when someone talked off the record, it remained just that.

Of course, if the story had large implications and there was no way to bust it loose, we would tip off the United Press in Los Angeles and get them to work on the story. Usually we had no trouble with this routine.

The first employee of the news room, outside myself, who was hired was Florence Lee Jones, a comely miss (I say that because she now is my wife) who came out of the University of Missouri School of Journalism to Las Vegas with her mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Burley M. Jones. Mrs. Jones became quite friendly with Mrs. F. F. Garside, wife of the publisher, who was the proofreader as well. Mrs. Garside's social life, however, began to interfere with her proofreading, so she talked Frank Garside into hiring Florence as proofreader.

Florence hadn't been there but about two days when I started in utilizing the education her father had paid for her to get at Missouri. I started to send her to the county courthouse when I didn't have time to go (which was becoming more frequent), and then I'd turn all the women's party stories over to her to write. Thus blossomed the first "women's editor" in Las Vegas history and launched her on a career that has spanned (up to this time) a period of thirty-three years. I have often told her that she knows more people than either her father or I, and she probably does. Those she doesn't know personally, she knows from telephone conversations she has had with them over the years.

As the paper continued to grow, I became more and more tied to the city desk. I was the only one in the paper's staff who had

experience in putting together a newspaper, and as we grew from six pages a day to eight, then to twelve, and then to sixteen, it became almost a day's work to put the sheet together. As I also was covering the city hall and police station as well as being sports editor, and I had to rewrite the "pony" which was coming in from Los Angeles, there just weren't enough hours in the day for me to cover the courthouse. So I turned that over to Florence in addition to her women's editor job. Somewhere along the line the proofreading job got lost, and as a result, anyone who had five or ten minutes without something to do picked up a handful of proof and went to work. That included A. E. Cahlan, Mrs. Mae Coleman who was the cashier, the classified girl, the shop foreman, and anyone else who was available. The paper might have looked pretty lousy (so far as typos were concerned) there for a while, but we always got the paper out on time, or a reasonable facsimile thereof.

Al, Florence, or I covered practically every night meeting held in the city of Las Vegas those early days, and there were plenty. One reason, in the city at least, was that the mayor couldn't get out of the house at night without a reason, so he set a city commission meeting whenever he wanted to get out. Florence kept track one year and the commission met 110 nights out of a possible 365. And that is quite a record.

It was just before the war when the next "hiree" came into the news room. I was just about ready for a nervous breakdown—hadn't had a vacation in three years—so I took off for Los Angeles for an extended stay. A guy by the name of "Doc" Speears (I don't think I ever knew his first name) came up to take over in the news room. It was the worst mistake we ever made. During the fourteen years I had been in the news room, we had collected a great number of pictures, engravings and

other things of priceless value. Spears, the big dope, started cleaning out the news room and tossed out all of those old pictures, engravings, etc. That is why much of the history of those days has disappeared.

It was during those early days, in the early 1930's also, that the *Review-Journal* began extracurricular service. We already had set up an election network, as I said previously in this history. Al and I were avid baseball fans and we knew there were others in Las Vegas just as avid. So we set about trying to see what we could do about bringing the World Series play-by-play into Las Vegas. It was the early days of radio in Las Vegas, and the static in the downtown area caused by the leaking electric lines prohibited anyone from getting any radio program in the daytime. So somewhere, Al dug up an "iron mike"—an electric scoreboard which, when operated correctly with switches and gimmicks, would reproduce a regular ball game with electric lights. It was quite a deal.

Al would stay at home (out in the then sticks at Sixth and Bonneville where the static was not so bad) and listen to the radio and relay the play-by-play to me by telephone, and I would operate the scoreboard. As a result, we gave the fans of Las Vegas their first World Series, play by play. That lasted until Al Drew, the then city electrician, cleared up the electric power company static and everyone could listen in their own homes. And don't forget, even while the World Series was going on, we had to get out that newspaper. That meant we'd have to get to the office a couple of hours early, get the inside pages out of the way, make a flying trip to the police station for coverage, and then back to start the ball game.

Looking back at it now, I don't know how the hell we did it, but we did. There are a lot of things we did then that the newspapermen of today don't do. We believed, however, if we

were in the newspaper business, we had an obligation to give the subscribers all the news possible and at a time when it was breaking. TV has eliminated most of that practice today, and as a result, the reporters don't give a damn about breaking news stories, and when they do, they become editorial writers and express their opinions in the news stories. A guy did that just once when I was in the business. A second time and he just wasn't around any more.

It was fun in those days. I guess I was a lot younger, was a lot more naive, and at the time, I liked my work more than I did money. As long as there was food, drink, and a few women, the world was rosy.

After World War II, I managed to pick up one of the sweetest (and I mean that in the finest sense of the word) newspapermen I have ever known. His name was Joe McClain and he was fresh out of USC journalism school. He, even then, was a newspaperman's newspaperman. He fit right into the news room picture of Florence and me. He believed that a journalist was an unemployed newspaperman, and if you wanted to be a newspaperman you worked at it. That meant doing your job come hell or high water, no matter what time it was or what the circumstances might be. It was easy to teach Joe my kind of newspapering. He had the same temperament as I and was just as dedicated. We became hard-working, hard-drinking and hard-driving newspapermen, and I think Joe learned something from me. I guess he had to; he was just out of school and I was an old veteran.

I was sure glad I had Joe with me right after the War. We were growing; help was hard to get, and when we needed a guy to go to work we really got some dillies. We got so many of that type that the news room formed a union, and after two days of existence they

walked out. The way I broke that strike was to take over all the duties of the news room myself and with Florence's help—she didn't believe either that a newspaper person was in the same class as a bricklayer or a stevedore, so she refused to join, too—we kept right on putting out the newspaper. I hired some more people during a week or two, and the strikers wandered off to other fields.

I lost one good newspaperman out of that batch and I've always regretted it. His name was Ed Walsh and he was just blossoming into a good newspaperman when he left. He went back to Newark, New Jersey, where he went to work for a newspaper there.

The second strike we had really hurt. It happened after Don Reynolds bought out Frank Garside, and Reynolds put in the teletypes which now are standard equipment. The typographical union didn't like it and struck. Some old hands went out the back door that morning. Dick Lochrie was the best. He had been foreman of the back shop since the first day Garside set foot in the old *Clark County Review*, and he had grown up with the paper also. There also were Pete Pieretti and Bill Whitehead, both of whom we taught the newspaper business. They went also. Of course, there were bums, too—the biggest one was Beryl Worley. He was the instigator of the strike, despite the fact that Lochrie, Al, and Garside all had fired him at one time or another for being drunk on the job and trying to foul up stories by inserting obscene material in the columns. He was a linotype operator and a good one, but he wasn't known as "Surly" Worley for nothing. It was during that strike that I started working in the back shop putting the type in the forms and making up the paper. I spent about three days being makeup man and managed to do a satisfactory job, if I do say so.

Reynolds brought in a bunch of strikebreakers and we continued to put out the newspaper. It was fortunate we had the teletypes, because without them, we'd never have gotten the type set. It was during this time that I learned just what kind of a man Don W. Reynolds was. He just loved confusion, and wherever he went he generated it. It hasn't changed in recent years. I think maybe that he kept his employees in a constant state of confusion so they wouldn't squawk about the wage scale he paid. I do know that he kept his editors in a constant state of fear by many things he did, and I have never worked for a man whom I despised as much as I did him. That is the reason I finally quit the newspaper business. I just couldn't stand the kind of people who were in it in Las Vegas.

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The Cahlan "school of journalism" opened in the fall of 1933 and continued on until sometime in 1960 when it closed its doors because of a lack of instructors. The one and only teacher was John F. himself, and when he quit the *Review-Journal*, the "school" folded. While it was in operation, however, it turned out a lot of high-class newspaper people. The one and only, who graduated *summa cum laude*, was Florence Lee Jones. She was always held up as the finest product of the course. Not because the teacher married the pupil, but because the pupil in many respects outranked the teacher. One basis for this statement is the fact that she still is in the newspaper business while I have found my excitement elsewhere.

I never will forget the first lesson I taught Florence. It was the first time she had gone out on an assignment, and it was a pretty big court trial she was covering. She came back to the

office at noon and sat there at her typewriter as the deadline inched closer and closer. She hadn't even written a word, and I was waiting for that story so I could put the paper to bed. After watching her for about half an hour and seeing that she was no closer to getting the story started than she was when she first came in, I asked her what was the matter.

"I can't write the lead," she said.

"Well, what went on in the courtroom? What impressed you the most?"

She started to talk, and after she had talked for a couple of minutes I said, "Well, write it. There's your lead."

I never had any difficulty like that again, and she, to this day, never has had any more troubles with leads. As I have told you in this narrative before, she and I held down the newspaper fort for many years before there were any other news room people employed.

There are a couple of reporters to whom I would have given the cum laude degree if that had been a conventional "school." They were Walter Wilcox and Joe McClain. I have already told you about Joe. Walt was the first news room employee to come in after Florence. I brought him down from Al Higginbotham's Journalism School at the University of Nevada in Reno. He had all the tools. He became my desk man, and his responsibility was to put the pages together. He had only been there a couple of months before he was doing everything two or three desk men would do.

Walt was drafted into World War II military duty and went to the European theater where he was run over by a tank and later sent back home with a disability discharge. When he came back he was a changed kid. He was bitter and had lost all his zest for the newspaper game.

He left the *Review-Journal* and drifted down to southern California where he

joined the faculty of UCLA as a journalism instructor. I understand he now is head of the journalism school, which means that the Cahlan school is being carried on to new generations.

Another reporter who just missed the charmed circle was Max Miller. I brought him down from San Jose State. He was the first of several who came to Las Vegas from there. Max was an ex-marine, tough, but a helluva good newspaperman. He learned easily, and when we started to put out the morning edition of the paper, Max was made the first editor, so you see how good he was. He could have made the "first team" of all-stars, except for the fact he not only was a moody kid, but he also had a temper. I had to fire him because one night, in his mood and spurred on by a couple of slugs of whiskey too many, he wrote a column in which he took all of his pent-up venom out on Don W. Reynolds, the publisher. Of course, Reynolds did not appreciate the compliment, so Max was on his way. lie went to Sacramento where he now is working for the *Bee*, and I understand, doing right well.

Chet Sobsey is another topnotcher, but I can't take all the credit for him. He was a United Press staffer for some time before he came to us, but I do think, and perhaps Chet will agree with me, that I made him into the best political columnist the state of Nevada ever has seen. And in saying that, I take into consideration Denver Dickerson whose "Salmagundi" ran in papers all over the state. Chet covered several legislative sessions and became one of the most feared and yet most respected newspapermen among the legislators. Chet could dig out stories that weren't supposed to be found, and with my backing, had the guts to write them. When the solons would start talking about sanctions, Chet would smile, wave his hand and say, "Try

it." Nobody ever did. We lost Chet to U. S. Senator Howard W. Cannon, who took him to Washington and made him his press secretary. When Jack Conlon died, Chet stepped into the top job.

Another youngster who I brought from San Jose was John Romero. If ever there was a babe in the woods when I first saw him, it was John. He wanted to be a sports editor the worst way. He had a lot to learn, but I tried to be patient with him, and it paid off. Having been a frustrated sports editor myself, I gave him the benefit of my past experience. With his ability, my advice and patience, and his own willingness to work, he became what I consider the best sports writer Las Vegas has ever had. (That, of course, is with the exception of the "old instructor" himself.)

John was a great teacher himself. He brought along a bunch of younger sports writers who since have come into their own. He used to start them out keeping statistics for him in basketball, football, baseball, and track, and then, when John got too busy, started them out writing. I remember kids like Tony Ashley, Jimmy Joyce, Royce Feour, and several others. They all are the end results of the Cahlan "school."

A joint protégé of Florence and mine was Maisie Gibson, member of a pioneer family in Las Vegas. When the social world in Las Vegas started expanding, it became necessary to get an assistant in the society department. Just anybody wouldn't do. Our society department was the strongest one in the entire establishment, and when it came to hiring an assistant, it had to be someone who fit into that same pattern. Maisie was just out of college and didn't know a thing about writing. But she had the background, and she agreed to give it a try. We in the old *Review-Journal* are glad she did. She became a valuable assistant to Florence, and when

Florence decided to retire in 1953 (the first time), Maisie took over. She served long and well.

The whole "school" started falling apart when Reynolds took over. There was an entirely different air in the news room. It seemed that everyone was hanging by their thumbs and just waiting for Reynolds to come along, cut them down, and toss them in the moat, along with the alligators he brought in from Oklahoma. But I am quite proud of my "kids." They all have cut a niche for themselves in the marts of trade, and I like to feel that I played some little part in getting them where they are today.

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## CONCLUSION

Before we conclude this, I'd like to discuss some of the family that is left, having told you about the history of the Cahlan-Edmunds family who are my forebears. I have a daughter, Virginia, who is now residing in Torrance, California—Virginia Otero. She was married (oh, I couldn't even remember my own wedding—it hadn't been that I was married on my birthday). She has a daughter, Yvonne, who is about six years old and going into the first grade in Torrance,

In the city of Las Vegas, of course, my brother, A. E. Cahlan and his wife, Ruth, reside here as do his son, John Forest, better known as "Frosty," and his wife, Jean Cahlan. Their three sons, Albert Edmunds Cahlan II, John Forest Cahlan, Jr., and Stephen Bradford Cahlan, as I said, were born in the state of Nevada. And my niece, Ruth Marion Henderson, is residing in Mount Ayr, Iowa, with her four children. She met a young man who came to Las Vegas to the Aerial Gunnery School out here (now Nellis Air Force Base) and married him while he was stationed in Las Vegas.

I have three aunts, who are still alive. Mrs. Will Sauer, a maternal aunt, who was Miss Alice Edmunds—and she recently celebrated her 90th birthday—she resides in Reno with her daughters, Alice Lou Lohse, and Jean Fry. She has another daughter, Myra Ratay, who lives in Denver, Colorado, and she has several grandchildren, who all reside around the Reno area. There is also a daughter, a cousin of mine, Gertrude Leary, who was the oldest of the Sauer family, who lives in northern California around the Bay area. My two paternal aunts are Mrs. Lena Cahlan Mathews of Menlo Park, California, and Mrs. Neva Cahlan Browne of San Francisco. Mrs. Browne has one daughter, Mrs. Charlotte Browne Reynolds of San Francisco. Mrs. Mathews' children are Arthur Mathews, Mrs. Ellen Wachhorst, and Mrs. Marcella Searles, all of whom reside in the Peninsula area of San Francisco.

My mother died about three years ago, at the age of 91. And my father died in 1933 after I had moved down to Las Vegas in 1929. My mother taught school until she was about 75

years old. She taught school down here in Las Vegas, at the Fifth Street Grammar School, and at the Ninth Street School, and at two or three other schools. During World War II, she was in southern California and taught in a private school. She had taught school from 1896, off and on until she retired when she was 75.

Let's see, she was born in 1875, and she was—she taught school over a period of fifty-five years, although not continuously, in the state of Nevada. Her first school was at Huffaker's, just outside of Reno, and then she was at Brown's Station, for quite some time—that was out of Reno. Then when I was born, she retired from schoolteaching until we moved back to Reno from Carson City in 1912, after having spent four years in the capitol. And she went back to work as a substitute until I got into high school. My brother was already in college when I was going to high school. And she taught substitute for a while. Then she took a job as a fifth grade teacher in Sparks, and taught in Sparks until she came down to Las Vegas. She spent ten years—fifteen years—in the Las Vegas schools. So she had quite an interesting career, and a school in North Las Vegas was named the Marion E. Cahlan School after her, as a tribute to her long service in the education of young people.

Looking back over a period of sixty-five years in the state of Nevada, it's quite refreshing, and quite satisfying to have been associated with all of these people that I'm talking about, and having done what I have done and accomplished what little I have accomplished along the way. I think that there is a statement that I always liked that a guy isn't worth anything unless, during his lifetime, he pays his civic rent. This, I have tried to do. To what degree I have accomplished this, I will leave to posterity. I do think that, as far as I

am concerned, some footsteps around the state of Nevada will remain after I have gone, and this is quite satisfying. It's been a real fine life as far as I'm concerned, and I've led a real fine life up to today, and in looking back over it, I wouldn't change a minute of it.

Sure, I made mistakes. I don't think there's anybody in the world, except the guys that are down in the cemetery, that haven't made mistakes, and won't make mistakes. But I hope none of mine has affected the state of Nevada adversely, or done anything to any of my friends or enemies.

It's my theory that if you have six people who will be willing to carry that casket down that last few steps, that you have made a real contribution, because you've got at least six friends. And going through this world and having seen people up and down, if you've got six friends at the end of the trail, you've done a pretty good job.

I have numbered among my acquaintances some of the finest people, most of whom live in the state of Nevada. I have seen places in my lifetime that I never expected to see when I was a kid. I can recall when I was working during the Christmas vacations for the Post Office Department, loading mail sacks onto the mail cars there at the Southern Pacific depot in Reno, and reading the tags to send the sacks to all of these faraway places—Chicago, New York City, and Washington and all of those places. They were far, far away as far as I was concerned when I was in high school and going to college. Over the last twenty-five years, I've seen all of them.

The greatest—one of the greatest—thrills that I ever had was one Fourth of July, coming into Washington, D. C., as the train backed in as it usually does in Washington station, and looking out the window on the Fourth of July and seeing Washington Monument, and the dome of the United States Capitol

for the first time. This is something I never will forget. Everybody has heard about the Mount Rushmore Memorial in South Dakota. I never will forget as we were coming through the tunnel that leads to the Mount Rushmore Memorial, just as you get toward the exit of the tunnel, this whole mountain opens up in front of you, and framed by the tunnel, is this tremendous monument of the four Presidents. It's something that really, as far as I am concerned, does bring tears to my eyes because I'm sort of a soft-hearted guy, and also one of the guys that cries every time he sees the flag going by and somebody's playing Sousa's march. But that's only a part of being an American and a Nevadan.

I have never regretted once that I was born and raised in the state of Nevada, because I think I have had the greatest opportunity to live a life of freedom and do just about whatever I wanted to do or was big enough to do.

I have been on many occasions in New York City, and one time I recall especially, my wife and I, walking down Broadway, and we noticed people turning around, looking at us as we passed by, and I said to my wife, "What the dickens are these people looking at? I don't think we look any different than they do. I think that I'm dressed the same way they are, and you're dressed the same way they are." And we walked along for a couple of blocks, and finally, I said, "I know what it is." I said, "We're the only people on Broadway who have a smile on our face!" These people in New York City are so harried. They're hurried, harried, they live in a tremendous noise, and it's no wonder that they have to accept tranquilizer pills and psychiatric treatments, and such.

You grow up in the state of Nevada, and you grow up in the great outdoors, and nobody's closing in on you except God, and

you can feel Him everywhere you go. It was quite interesting several years ago when a psychiatrist from Cal Tech came up here. I was showing him around, and we got out on Boulder Dam. He looked down that wide expanse of concrete, and he turned to me and said, "Mr. Cahlan, do you ever have any suicides off this dam?"

I'd never thought of it, and I said, "Well, no, not that I'd ever heard of; none at all."

And he said, "That's strange." Then he thought for a minute, and then he said, "No, it isn't." He said, "I can understand people jumping off the Pasadena bridge down there, because everything is just crowding in on them; they see no way out, and this is all there is, and I might as well get rid of it." He said, "And you come up here and you take a look at those mountains, you get all of this free air, you've got freedom, expanse—nothing's closing in on you. You lose all sense of pressures. You just grow up. I can see that you people are very happy up here, and I only wish that I could be a citizen."

Well, this is the way it is in the state of Nevada wherever you go. When the pressures start in tightening up on you, I don't care where it is in the state of Nevada, within twenty-five minutes, you can be out all by yourself in the solitude of the desert or wherever it is. There are no people around. You can hear the birds singing and see the sun shining—it's just something that—I just can't explain it.

I'm very fortunate that I have been able to do it all my life and have never been at all sorry that I remained in Las Vegas. I am sure that, as far as I am concerned, I could have gone back to New York City and become a sports writer or gone into the radio field back there. (Incidentally, I was the first man in the United States ever to announce a football game. It was at the University of Nevada in

1919—1920. There were no loudspeakers or no electronics devices that could carry my voice, so I had a big megaphone. I would walk up and down the sidelines of Mackay Field and announce who had carried the ball and where he went, and how many yards he made. As far as I know, that was the first time in the history of football that a football game was given a play-by-play "broadcast." Very fortunately, as I told you, when I was broadcasting the World Series, I had a very strong voice. I think you've commented on the fact that my voice has held up very well in these interviews. I had it trained ever since I was about sixteen years old. I guess when I was a kid, my mother said I used to have a pretty good voice when I yelled for something, so I guess the early training was good for me.)

But, as I say, I have known the high and the low, as I started with this interview— Presidents and prostitutes—how far apart can you get? I am not particularly proud of some of the people I've met and the circumstances under which I met them. But I can tell anybody this: that I have learned something from every person that I have met in my travels through this life. I've even learned a lot from the juvenile delinquents whom I started on their way to rehabilitation.

I'm going to tell you a story that is a good finale for this interview that I will carry with me to the end of my days. When I have been down under terrible depression, I have always thought about this story, and—it happened to me—it has caught me up on numerous occasions.

There was a kid down here by the name of Clyde Farrell, who, because of a split family, had been engaged in a lot of robberies and burglaries. He was about sixteen, seventeen years old—I guess he was seventeen, sixteen when I first met him, in the course of my juvenile duties. His mother and father had

split up. His mother was nowhere around, and his father was trying to make enough money to take care of an older brother and sister and Clyde. And as a result, he was very seldom home, and the sister had the responsibility of raising Clyde, and she was kind of a wild kid herself—she was in high school. So Clyde just drifted from bad to worse. The kid got himself involved in about seventeen burglaries in the city of Las Vegas, each one worse than the preceding one. Finally, I just had to take him off probation and try to send him to Elko.

Prior to the time that I took him before the judge, I discussed with the judge, Judge William E. Orr, who at that time was district judge and also ex-officio juvenile judge, and a very fine gentleman. He later became judge of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco and was very highly respected in the legal profession. I discussed the problem with the judge, and I told the judge that I was convinced that this kid was not fundamentally bad, but that he just didn't have anybody to guide him. And so we talked it over, and he said, "Well, the kid's old enough to go into the armed services, and maybe we can talk him into it—going into the armed services.

So we got him up in the judge's chambers and talked to him and we finally asked him if he would like to go into the armed services and see if he could get himself straightened out, and he said he'd be very happy to. He didn't have any home life that he was leaving, and he'd just go into the service and see if he could make something of himself. This was before World War II started. So we arranged it so that the record would be obliterated so that he could join the services. So he went over and volunteered for the Marines.

This kid was, before he left Las Vegas, sneaking down alleys and going anywhere where he wouldn't see anybody because he felt that everybody knew his juvenile and

family record, and so forth, and he didn't want to be seen. So the kid had been down to boot camp, and came back to Las Vegas. I'll never forget—I was sitting in the office of the *Review-Journal* on First Street, and here came this kid, straight as an arrow, and in a Marine uniform—a blue coat, deep blue coat and lighter blue trousers and orange stripe down the side, a cap on his head, and he just walked in there and had a smile on his face a mile wide. tie said, "Mr. Cahlan, I have found what I want to be now. I want to be a Marine."

And I said, "Clyde, that's fine."

And instead of walking down alleys and ducking around and trying to get rid of his companions, this kid just walked down Fremont Street like he owned it. That was his first step up on his way to a comeback.

I didn't hear from him for quite a while, and finally, I got a letter from him. He was down in the South somewhere, training to be a paratrooper. And he was with the First Marine Division in the paratroops. When the war broke out, the First Division was the first outfit that went into the Pacific War Zone, and then the First Division fought on Guadalcanal. I got letters from Clyde—two or three letters while he was on Guadalcanal. The last letter I got from him said, "We have survived two of the Jap attacks, and I don't know whether we'll be able to survive many more."

As I was reading that letter, I recalled that he had said several months prior to that that he had been married, and that he had left his wife in the States and gone to Guadalcanal. And shortly after I read that letter, I was looking over at the teletype, the United Press teletype, and a list of the World War casualties. "Private First Class Clyde Farrell." He had died in defense of the United States.

I didn't think any more about it—I mean, it hit me right between the eyes at the time,

and I didn't think much about it—until the first golf Tournament of Champions in Las Vegas. I was in the press tent out at the Desert Inn, when there was a page came over the loudspeaker—the public address system—and said, "Mr. Cahlan is wanted at the gate of the press tent."

So I went out to the gate, and here was a young woman, standing with a small boy and holding his hand. And she said, "Mr. Cahlan, I'm Mrs. Clyde Farrell." Then she said, "This is the son that Clyde never saw." She said, "He told me about how you brought him up out of the dirt, and I just wanted you to see the son that he never saw, and thank you for him."

And at this time, the tears were flowing down my cheeks. And every time I think of it—it's something that I'll never forget. As I say, this—if I've never done anything else in the world, I have saved the lives of two kids, and this I am very thankful that I have lived for. And with that, let's wrap it up.



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